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The Psychological Effects of Patriarchy and Courtship: Eighteenth Century Women's Mentalities in Pamela and Clarissa

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State University at New York
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Department of English

The Psychological Effects of Patriarchy and Courtship: Eighteenth Century Women's
Mentalities in *Pamela* and *Clarissa*

A Thesis in
English

by

Peter J. LaPorta

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Arts
May 2020

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The Psychological Effects of Patriarchy and Courtship: Eighteenth Century Women's
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An Abstract of a Thesis

In

English

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Abstract of Thesis

The Psychological Effects of Patriarchy and Courtship: Eighteenth Century Women's Mentalities in *Pamela* and *Clarissa*

I plan to analyze the effects of a patriarchal courtship system on female mentalities during the English eighteenth-century. Samuel Richardson's first two novels, *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady* (1747-48), will be used toward this end based on their epistolary format. The usage of these letters and journals will be pivotal to the evidence based on the characters creating a written nexus of their minds and bodies through their writing. I plan to lay out the ways in which the reader can emotionally feel and understand both Pamela and Clarissa's breakdown in mentality through their linkage of letters to their respective selves and feelings. It is this embodiment that showcases a networking of their minds and bodies for their letter receivers to experience. Letter writing was considered a type of metaphorical sanctuary that the writer could reside in and display their true self and intents for others without being physically present. It is through the mind that they can show their thoughts and it is through the letter envisaging the body that encases this privacy for only the letter receiver to look at. Through these feelings, the reader can see and experience the mental breakdown of both characters, whether it is through their conformity to patriarchy, Pamela, or their disavowal and eventual death from it, Clarissa.

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Dedication
To my Father

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Chapter I: Introduction

Section 1: The Project and Procedures

Much of the English eighteenth century's reliance on letter writing emerged from a longing for human contact that was rendered nearly impossible due to great distances that sometimes separated people. This human contact was a necessity of the Age of Sensibility in order to fulfill a sense of connection between people and the emotional response that would follow soon after the verbal exchange. Letters became a way to fill this gap of longing the English population felt during the latter half of the eighteenth-century. Samuel Richardson drew extensively on this emotional response between people through the language imbued within letters. Because of the growing popularity of letters, Samuel Richardson decided to comprise his first two novels exclusively of correspondence. *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady* (1747-48) utilized ways in which letters could create a response of emotions and thoughts through a nexus of the minds and bodies of both heroines being imprinted within the letters of their respected novels. Both heroines of the novels, Pamela and Clarissa, become imbedded through the words and sentences they write, showing their thoughts and feelings and, essentially, becoming the letters themselves. Because they share a nexus to their letters, and because I believe they become their letters, both heroines become physically represented through their correspondence, completing this idea of a body and mind nexus they link themselves to.

Richardson shows this nexus further by drawing on the physical exchange between letter writer and letter receiver, and the unstated contract they make with each other regarding the privacy of their letters, which are meant only for the writer and reader involved. Both Pamela

and Clarissa become victimized by their antagonistic male assailants, Mr. B— and Robert Lovelace, respectively. Both males break this unstated contract and begin to either read the heroine's letters or write for them, essentially attempting to become them. This leads to both physical abuse and a near rape situation between Mr. B— and Pamela, and a tragic rape scene between Lovelace and Clarissa. This physical connection becomes the aim of both antagonists and creates a bodily nexus further, which begins to wear on the mentalities of both heroines. Because both male antagonists are seizing and violating the heroine's letters, the males seize and violate the heroines in a very physical and real situation. This surrogate physical violation that both heroines undergo becomes a literal physical violation which then turns to a mental violation through the same means. Both Mr. B— and Robert Lovelace show attempts at forcing a mental destruction on both heroines, hoping to overtake them and turn them into their wives. This molding of their minds creates a linkage between eighteenth-century English society's views and laws on patriarchy, and the mental breakage of the feminine mind to submit to a male dominated society. Through Richardson's accurate reflection of English society and the trials it forced upon females, as well as through Pamela submitting to patriarchy, and Clarissa's denial of it and eventual death, I believe that a nexus between the heroines' capabilities of utilizing the eighteenth-century's desire to write letters and mirror what realities females faced under patriarchy is paramount to consider.

Much of my research falls in line with Marta Kvande's article "Printed in a Book: Negotiating Print and Manuscript Cultures in *Fantomina* and *Clarissa*," which presents the nexus of mind and body found within *Clarissa*. I do believe that Kvande's article can be applicable to *Pamela* as well because both Richardson's first and second novels revolve around and, in *Clarissa*'s case, improves upon what feelings and aspirations emerge from letters and the

ways in which printed language is the source of a written mind and body being found within rhetoric. Kvande believes the eighteenth-century drew on an understanding of correspondence in a much wider range, writing that the population was “divided between ideas of the letter as direct representation of a self and as carefully constructed rhetorical tool in a social context” (Kvande 239). The phrase “rhetorical tool” is an important crux to Kvande’s argument as Clarissa uses written language as a tool to persuade the people she writes to, to feel and to understand the plight she is facing. Clarissa needs letters in order to tell her story as her spoken language is censored by her family, effectively only leaving Clarissa to use a written language out of silence. Although Kvande does not argue the negative psychological and sociological effects that patriarchy held over Clarissa, she does specify her belief that “it was understood as natural, female expression of desire in letters came to be a sign of the real self, a sign that could not be faked” (Kvande 240). Kvande’s regard toward the real and unreal is another aspect of my thesis as both Clarissa and Pamela, through their own structured beings found within their letters, show their true selves and who they aspire to be and ultimately were denied the opportunity to be. Both Mr. B— and Robert Lovelace show their false selves and even accuse both heroines of being false as well, creating a sense of unification of mind and body within all letters involved throughout both novels. Kvande’s article is relevant when dealing with the thought of the feminine mind and body, and the nexus they create through letters reflecting what a patriarchal English society deemed as law and warranted in a household setting during the eighteenth-century.

Section 2: A Review of Foundational Scholarship of Richardson’s Novels

Throughout the course of my thesis, I will be exploring some of the foundational scholarship that has been written about Samuel Richardson as an author, as well as about

Clarissa and *Pamela*. The first I will be utilizing is Margaret Anne Doody's 1974 work *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson*. Doody elaborates on the written naturalness that is created through the passion of rhetoric that is found in *Pamela* and *Clarissa*'s letters. One such example is how, "Pamela has an individual voice, and because of the nature of that voice (which is also for us her individual character) her inner life is closely connected with a credible outside world" (Doody 33). Doody, relating *Pamela*'s written language to what "outside world" Richardson wrote, creates a sense of *Pamela*'s outside world being comparable to that of the eighteenth-century English society; both are intertwined with each other, revealing a type of realism that Richardson wanted to reflect. Doody continues this theme of rhetoric mirroring eighteenth-century society through an analysis of *Clarissa*, and the tragic themes that are found within: "The reader's sympathy is evoked, and not because she is a conventional nice young lady with proper ideas, or a Beauty forced into the embraces of a Beast. The reader is held because she demands the same kind of attention as Milton's Satan" (Doody 101). *Clarissa*'s rhetoric throughout the course of her novel does demand attention by both those she writes to and us as the audience, as we are the only true witnesses of her abuse and rape. This type of antagonistic passion that Richardson places in Lovelace is relatable to a very male and dominant outlook that many people held during an eighteenth-century patriarchal society. Doody's various claims help push my own arguments further as I will develop how patriarchy is what caused an anti-passion to occur within the male characters of *Pamela* and *Clarissa*. This antagonistic passion is what causes both heroines to psychologically breakdown and either become an expectation of widowhood during the eighteenth-century (*Pamela*), or death being the only outcome for both psychological and physical damage (*Clarissa*).

The second critical piece which will be developed further is Terry Eagleton's *The Rape of Clarissa*, which considers the structure of *Clarissa* and what the novel's aim is toward society and language. In Eagleton's introduction, he carefully pinpoints that "Richardson's novels are not mere images of conflicts fought out on another terrain, representations of history which happens elsewhere; they are themselves a material part of those struggles, pitched standards around which battle is joined, instruments which help to constitute social interests rather than lenses which reflect them" (Eagleton 4). In order to dissect Eagleton's statement, it must be noted that Eagleton believes the language used by *Clarissa* is not so much because society is shaping her words to reflect said society, but more so because she is shaping society based on her rhetorical language. Based on *Clarissa*'s, as well as *Pamela*'s language, and the fact that both heroines wish to infuse themselves through mind and body within their letters; they do become part of the long history of feminine oppression. Because of both heroines taking part in a history which oppressed females, they become two examples of Richardson's reflection of those struggles and conflicts many females faced under patriarchy. Eagleton's analysis does not always, however, agree with my own as he believes "by using the epistolary form, Richardson equally deprives himself of this resource: you cannot have an authorial voice-over if the characters do all the writing" (Eagleton 25). Eagleton's point counters my own approaches about Richardson and his ultimate agenda toward recreating plights and trials of females through examples led by *Pamela* and *Clarissa*. However, I do believe that Richardson's voice is guiding much of what is being written as he is the inventor of said characters, crafting each situation and word they write. Each character also creates this nexus by linking their minds and bodies to their letters; therefore, showing his audience a society that has a very male focus on dominance.

To continue, the next main critical source I will be critiquing is Terry Castle's 1982 work, *Clarissa's Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson's Clarissa*, which focuses on what interpretation means to both Richardson's readers and the characters within *Clarissa* itself. Interpretation of any novel comes from the willingness and activeness a reader wishes to take in order to uncover what conventions, contexts and social attitudes invent or emerge from any given fictional text. Castle's work here is extensive and fundamental to any reader or scholar that wishes to critique *Clarissa* as a story that is structured by the importance of deciphering what clues the characters leave behind. One way Castle focuses on the idea of response is through what is termed "the real reader," as follows: "It [*Clarissa*] opens itself equally to interpretation, that of real readers. I have been concerned here, above all, to enlarge on this fundamental correspondence—to say what it might mean to decipher, both inside the fiction and outside" (Castle 16). Castle's assessment of the importance of readers emerges from our understanding of what fiction brings to our lives and how it can shape the world around us, rather than reflecting it. The critical approach that "real readers" utilize is that of their own interpretations rather than ones that authors may want them to think. Castle continues the introduction by revealing the main argument: "What has been missing until very lately has been an investigation of the basic link between 'inside' and 'outside' in *Clarissa*, between story and shape: the matter of interpretation itself" (Castle 18). Where Castle believes that it is only the story and shape that link themselves to a reader's interpretation, it is also what occurs inside the characters of a fictional narrative through what their thoughts are evoking within us, as well as the emotions that can be expressed through their words. Given the Age of Sensibility was in full swing when *Clarissa* was written, it is important to focus on what ideals were on people's minds during the period. Richardson thought of sociological impacts of patriarchy when writing both

Pamela and *Clarissa* and I believe this needs to be considered when dealing with time periods and Richardson's thought process of reflecting said time period.

The last foundational scholarship I will be reviewing throughout my analysis of *Pamela* and *Clarissa* is Thomas Keymer's *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* from 1992. Throughout Keymer's text, he enacts the notion that the epistolary format of writing centers itself, specifically in Richardson's works, on the experience of writing rather than the writing being the experience of an outside reality. Keymer believes that Richardson used "letters simply as a convention for achieving dramatic immediacy. By restoring to view the many aspects of his narrative method that qualify or interfere with effects of this kind, it attempts to reinstate him as an epistolary novelist in the fullest possible sense" (Keymer xvi). This "dramatic immediacy" is an idea I will be focusing on as the drama that is enacted from the text to the readers' understanding is shaping their experience with the characters and narrative. However, I will be building on Keymer's idea further through the act of *Pamela* and *Clarissa* being affected by courtship and patriarchy which causes their minds to suffer a mental breakage which is reflected through the dramatic situations both heroines write about. Keymer continues his introduction by claiming that he is not only concerned with the "formal properties of Richardson's narrative but with its consequences, again, for the reader—and from this perspective the epistolary form can be seen to intensify the difficulties of reading still further" (Keymer xvii). Keymer's focus on the question of a reader's role within fiction is crucial to any critical response of Richardson, as it not only implies an activeness within readership, but also the role a text can have on a reader's intuition. However, throughout my own thesis I will be showing, in certain regards, that the epistolary genre can act as a conduit toward reader

connectivity to not only characters and narrative, but to a wider range of social attitudes that emerge henceforth.

Section 3: A Précis of the Planned Chapters

In order to establish a more clear and concise understanding about the structure and methods of my thesis, I believe a précis for the structure of each chapter would be beneficial. My first chapter will focus solely on Richardson's first novel, *Pamela*. Within this chapter, a full analysis will be given of Richardson's text towards the aim of proving a nexus between Pamela's mind and body within her letters. The rhetorical language that Pamela imbues throughout her writing is indicative to the thoughts and feelings experienced during the middle part of the eighteenth-century in England, and the social attitudes that became standard throughout the centuries prior to Richardson's text. Mr. B— uses tactics in order to convert Pamela into his wife, effectively erasing what defined Pamela before her confrontation with Mr. B—. Mr. B— was successful in this mental conversion into what the expectations were towards women and wifehood. Much of Pamela's conversion will be sought out through specific statements she writes within her letters and journals, revealing to the reader her change in self and mind. Through each foundational scholarship mentioned in the prior section, as well as other critiques, I will set out on showing Pamela's forced psychological breakdown into a redefined example of what many women faced under the pressures of an eighteenth-century social expectation in patriarchal standards.

My second and final chapter will revolve around Richardson's second novel, *Clarissa*, as I believe both novels deserve their own critical focus. This chapter will be exploring Clarissa's own nexus between her mind and body which is implanted within her correspondence. Much of

this chapter revolves around Clarissa's family attempting to influence her to submit to an arranged marriage with Mr. Solmes in order to achieve a monetarily beneficial marriage through their younger daughter. Clarissa denying the wishes of her parents, and the fact that she wants to marry for love and later does not want to marry at all, causes her parents to isolate her in her room, which is where a break in her psychological state occurs. Through the usage of Clarissa's letters, I will be guiding the reader through her mental state from the beginning of her entrapment in her own room, to her eventual kidnapping by Robert Lovelace and her forced confinement at Mrs. Sinclair's brothel. The Harlowes' enacting patriarchal law on Clarissa is crucial toward understanding the destruction of Clarissa's mentality, and what she feels is her only reprieve: her own death through starvation. I do believe Richardson wanted to infuse what situations and thoughts he felt toward the eighteenth-century and its treatment of women which is exemplified throughout *Clarissa*, and I will be attempting to prove Clarissa as an example of what many females faced when contending with a male dominated society.

Chapter II: A Mind Conformed: Pamela's Psychological Conversion into Wifehood

Within the confines of *Pamela*, there exists an emergence of a societal construct that Samuel Richardson chose to illustrate to his audience. This construct was the long-lasting psychological effects that patriarchy held over females in the social expectations of marriage. This expectation of what a wife should be decreased the amount of liberties that women were beginning to acquire during the eighteenth-century, and also decreased and shaped their mental state in a much wider societal context. Richardson was able to reveal this situation through the letters that Pamela writes, allowing his readers to feel her words and experience her captivity under Mr. B— based on Richardson's learning and own education on the female psyche. Toni Bowers and John Richetti, the two editors of the abridged Broadview edition of *Clarissa*, write about the careful attention that Richardson used when writing both *Pamela* and *Clarissa* in relation to Richardson's own studies on the female psyche. Richardson was a "close and empathetic student of female psychology, and relied heavily on the encouragement and regard of a coterie of female readers" (Bowers and Richetti 13), which aided in his direct regard for his female readers, appealing to their sensibility and common ground for active independent thought. Richardson utilized the epistolary genre as a vessel to carry these thoughts and feelings to his female audience beginning with his first novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*.

Pamela relied on its storytelling and framework to accurately represent the female psyche under duress in a patriarchal courtship society. Creating *Pamela* as an epistolary fiction allowed Pamela's own thoughts and feelings to be heard by readers to gain an understanding of her plight. Richardson begins his novel with a type of preamble written in the form of a letter which Richardson most likely received from Revd. William Webster, according to Thomas Keymer and Alice Wakley, editors of the Oxford World's Classic edition of *Pamela*. In said letter, Webster,

as editor of the *Weekly Miscellany*, lays out his own reflections of how Pamela, "pours out all her Soul in them [letters] before her Parents without Disguise; so that one may judge of, nay, almost see, the inmost Recesses of her Mind. A pure clear Fountain of Truth and Innocence, a Magazine of Virtue and unblemish'd Thoughts!" (*Pamela* 8). Richardson created a way for his readers to feel and understand Pamela's mind through the letters that accurately reflect her situation as it's happening as well as the emotional distress that she is compelled to write about to her parents. This single view, as Webster says, shows the truth better than if an outside narrator or even Mr. B— were to tell her story. Although Pamela and Mr. B—'s stories eventually become intertwined as both characters conform each other to a married life, much can still be gained from the experience that eighteenth-century readers had while living in a society that was dominated by a male presence to overshadow any female right of liberty.

This truth Webster sees in Pamela's writing, paired with the cultural relevance in Richardson's novels, comes from the act of letter writing creating a nexus between the writer's mind and body. Letter writing, specifically to the epistolary genre and the characters in Richardson's novels, is a type of sanctuary shared by writer and letter receiver. Letters allow the writer to reflect themselves in a profound and meaningful way: through what their mind directly relays during a situation, as well as what they feel during the situation. These combined thoughts and feelings create a sense of a letter as a manifestation of a person and the actions they perform. Both mind and feelings are needed to be present in order to create a nexus between person and internal self, which is then physically written so the letter holds itself as a vessel for the body as well. This strong emotional attachment and nexus of self through letter writing, is where Marta Kvanne finds her voice in relation to Clarissa and her representation of self. The representation of self through letters applies to any epistolary text including *Pamela*, of which Kvanne argues

“Because it was understood as natural, female expression of desire in letters came to be a sign of the real self, a sign that could not be faked” (Kvande 240). The expression of a true and real self that some read Pamela as, appears early in the novel as Pamela begins requiring the reader to understand her emotions and the stress her mind is under given Mr. B—’s constant pursuit of her person and her letters. Many of these feelings are only meant to be seen by her parents, but we as readers begin to form our own conclusions of Pamela and why she writes as she does, which is provided within the first few pages of the novel as Pamela is being carefully watched by Mr. B— as she writes to her parents. Given that Pamela is a maid servant, Mr. B— uses his status as master to demand every piece of correspondence to pass through him: as Pamela reports him saying, "Well then, Let me see how you are coming on in your Writing! O how I was sham'd!— He, in my Fright, took it, without saying more, and read it quite thro', and then gave it me again" (*Pamela* 12). This shame and fright that Pamela feels is passed through her own mind and creates this nexus of the true emotions that we as readers can share. Our sympathy for Pamela creates a bridge that gives us true insight into how Pamela defines herself and what defines her situation. Pamela is in constant need to write about her feelings in relation to her situation to her parents, which forms the distant emotions she is experiencing while her parents cannot physically be present to witness them.

This feeling of self through letters defines not only the letter writer but also the age itself. During the English eighteenth-century, both sexes were finding ways to create a sense of liberty and individualism that caused morals and patriarchal custom to change. Readers can see Pamela undergoing this change as she attempts to exert a type of independence from Mr. B—. Pamela seeking independence can be proven further by Pamela's thoughts being transposed into another of her early letters as she explains, "To say my Master likes me, when I know what End he aims

at, is Abomination to my Ears; and I shan't think myself safe till I am at my poor Father's and Mother's" (*Pamela* 47). This knowledgeable personality does not only come from Pamela being a product of the age, but it also shows the resilience she had during the beginning of the novel that slowly shifts after more abuse becomes an obstacle to her commitment to asserting her own liberty and morals. This sense of self that has previously been noted and in congruence with Pamela as a writer, Kvande relays how, "Letters seem to have functioned in the period as a site where rhetoric meets the self, to which readers and writers brought their awareness of these competing aims. Letters thus provided a nexus for the intersection of subjectivity and conventions" (Kvande 241). Kvande's assertion of a rhetorical self in letters; shows the convincing manner that defines Pamela within her letters. Pamela causes the reader to feel for her situation and also creates that sense of competing aims that she wishes to uphold and what Mr. B— wishes to change, making Pamela's aims his own.

As the novel continues, a reader of eighteenth-century literature can see what values Richardson implies in his depiction of Pamela and her family. It was important enough for Richardson to actively reflect a type of truth that eighteenth-century society had to offer and in doing so, places emphasis on Pamela's writing and the duty she had to her parents. Mary Vermillion notes the importance of duties in *Pamela* and in a wider context of an historical setting for Richardson's novel: "Children were to place family interests above their own and to make status considerations a priority when choosing a spouse" (Vermillion 399). Virtue kept by females during the eighteenth-century was a major priority in the context of church, state, and family as they enacted this idea of virtue and purity early as a female child progressed into the later stages of their lives. Almost all of Pamela's letters articulate this ideology as she constantly asks her parents for permission or their own views on what she should do about her situation

with Mr. B— as she wants to "leave all these Things to your Reflection, my dear Parents; but I can write no more. My poor Heart's almost broke! Indeed it is." (*Pamela* 75). Pamela's deference to her parents shows the imbued authority that patriarchy held over females of any age and this permission asked of Pamela's parents shows a tuned mind to the societal expectations of the time period. Although Pamela reflects a deference to patriarchy towards her parents, this patriarchal standpoint does not seem to be much of a concern to them. The Andrewses seem to be more focused on the idea of parents protecting their only daughter from the trouble she has undergone through Mr. B—'s dominating male presence.

With this societal expectation overtaking Pamela's writing, she not only represents herself through her nexus of mind and letter but mirrors the result of a male-dominated society as well. The authority that comes from the causality of patriarchal intent defines Mr. B—'s pursuit and eventual capture of Pamela. This captivity is not only of her physical person, but of her mind and letters as well as he begins to censor her motives for a free self, which effectively censors Pamela's desire for her voice to be heard and censors her need for herself to be free. John Dussinger writes of similar actions that Mr. B— takes in pursuing his burning desire to turn Pamela into his own submissive product: "Throughout the story, Mr. B. tries to exert his authority as the censor of Pamela's writing, intercepting her mail before it goes out of the house and sometimes withholding seditious information" (Dussinger 39). Although Mr. B—'s forgery of Pamela's letters will be focused on later, I think it is important to introduce this information now as it shows Mr. B—'s intention at the end of the novel has not changed from the beginning of the novel, and it also emulates the problem that Pamela dealt with from her first refusals of Mr. B—. Dussinger's article carries Pamela's own thought process of someone who is mentally restrained in her actions and letters throughout the novel.

As the novel progresses, Pamela is intercepted by Mr. B— as she was forced to leave his house under the pretense of denying him submission. Being the sexually passionate man that Mr. B— is, he stages a kidnapping of Pamela on her journey home to her parents. After this abduction occurs, Mr. B— begins to write to her parents under the guise that he is Pamela as well as reading any correspondence sent to her. This breach between letter writer and receiver signifies Mr. B—’s breach of Pamela’s mind and becomes a metonymic ground where he then, too, breaches the manifestation of her body. Within his first correspondence with Mr. Andrews, Mr. B— thinks he is obliged to write, "that I have discover'd the strange Correspondence carry'd on between you and your Daughter, so injurious to my Honour and Reputation, and which I think you should not have encourag'd till you knew the Truth of it" (*Pamela* 92). This sublimation of Mr. B— not only shows his own form of truth, although very false: this also shows his power over Pamela and her family, initially, as Jessica Leiman states, “Through this counter-narrative, [by which] Mr. B. redirects his erotic pursuit and, more devastatingly, supplants Pamela’s story with his own” (Leiman 226). This planting of self through Pamela’s story creates a way for Mr. B— to exert his power, but it also shows Richardson’s desire to show the truth of male dominance and the molding power it has over a female mentality. The control that Mr. B— asserts over Pamela is one of the reasons for her strain of mind and body and the eventual conformity she experiences in response to his abuse.

In context of this nexus, Mr. B— pretending to be Pamela creates a disconnection between Pamela and her parents, effectively destroying what relationship has been built through her letters. This breach and falsity of letter writing can be proven further as Pamela’s next letter contains, "I will begin here with my Account from the last Letter I wrote you, in which I inclosed my Stuff of Verses" (*Pamela* 99). This shows that her last letter to her parents envisioned herself

and not what had been artfully crafted by Mr. B—. As Pamela's mind and body are placed carefully into her letters, this nexus creates a sense of who she is as a person, presenting the body that houses both her thoughts and feelings. It is this breach of self that Pamela experiences from Mr. B— in her letters that will coincide with the attempted breach of Pamela's person through the near rape scene that occurs soon after this false letter is written.

The importance of the body in *Pamela* stems from the idea of the power that Mr. B— exercises over Pamela by falsifying her letters and becoming, in effect, her person. Mr. B—'s tactic creates the sense that he is attempting to unite himself with Pamela as a wife over whom he would have both physical and mental control. It is this literary space of writing that Richardson found himself drawing on and improving in order to effectively give his characters grounding in physical presence and thought, which Katherine Binhammer focuses on in her chapter of *Samuel Richardson in Context* entitled "Sentiment and Sensibility." The elimination of the literal and internal spaces within literature would synthesize the two spaces and unify them, a concept Binhammer asserts Richardson was toying with. Binhammer suggests "experience and representation, life and writing, internalised emotion and externalised text, an ontological experiment doomed to fail but fascinating nonetheless, for its desire to represent interiorised subjectivity" (Binhammer 290) which holds bearing for my argument in how Binhammer relates the concepts of the internal self to the external self becoming one within Richardson's novels. However, Richardson did not exactly fail at the unification of character and reality as Binhammer believes, as both internal and external selves are present within *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, causing both heroines and male antagonists to be accurately represented in full. This representation was not of isolated cases of familial interaction, but rather society's treatment of wives and family through the patriarchal institution on a much wider scale. Binhammer

continues to write of how “The body within sentimental culture is imbued with an expressive language such that blushing cheeks and throbbing breasts are synecdoches for inner feelings” (290), which defines Pamela’s bodily reactions toward Mr. B—, in ways that we as readers can only gather from her letters. The fact that Pamela is chronicling her bodily reactions, whether it is her blushing or fainting, reveals Pamela’s entire and true self to the reader and allows a way for her body to be present without physically being present. The internalized feelings of Pamela are heightened and almost created because of Mr. B— and the way he handles Pamela in order to force her to become his wife. Although Mr. B— may be an isolated instance of an abusive suitor, he still portrays the characteristics of the eighteenth-century becoming written and dramatized for Richardson’s audience to feel and understand.

The fact that Richardson presents his characters in a fashion that parallels a truth within society correlates with what defined gender during the eighteenth-century. In allowing the correlation of gender to happen through Pamela’s letter writing and the ideological standpoint she assumes on submitting to her parents and retaining her virtue, she is not only seen but felt through the words that emanate from her personality and true feeling because of her treatment by Mr. B—. Through Pamela, Richardson wants a nexus of self to create this sensation of emotion within the reader to understand more closely the context of the social and political upbringing females endured during the eighteenth-century. Similarly, Roy Porter utilizes a historical lens to define the eighteenth-century by its laws and social expectations of gender and sex: “The basic assumption governing relations between the sexes, underpinning attitudes and institutions, and backed ultimately by law, was that men and women were naturally different in capacity, and so ought to play distinct social roles” (Porter 23). These roles that both Pamela and Mr. B— play are a direct critique of what Porter writes about. Richardson created these characters in a way

that could not only be read but also felt through the letters produced by each character, essentially revisioning Pamela and Mr. B— through their letters as a product of the century's "basic assumption" about gender. These social roles within history Porter writes about can be similarly related to Terry Eagleton's own writing in his introduction of his foundational text *The Rape of Clarissa* where he focuses a small portion on Pamela and her impact. Eagleton states how Pamela is "the name for a diverse set of social practices, an emblem encountered at every turn, a domestic talking-point and public declaration of faith. The literary text is not merely to be read: it is to be dramatized, displayed, wielded as cultural totem" (Eagleton 5) and it is Pamela's capacity as a "cultural totem" that gives her so much ubiquity and importance within eighteenth-century fiction. Eagleton is drawing on the assumption that Pamela's social practices are based on society's own, creating this nexus of mind and body found within her letters. The only way Pamela's letters and the fiction itself can exist is through its storytelling, cultural functions, and so on, provided through the letters that encase her mind and thoughts. Pamela's letters are vital in not only understanding herself as a character, but how she as a female is slowly changing over the course of the novel through her own mental breakdown based on Mr. B—'s and society's treatment of females under patriarchy.

Following Pamela's trick of suicide and then her contemplating actually committing it, her letters become increasingly frantic and disconnected from who she was during the beginning stages of the novel. As when she comments, "O dear Heart! What a World do we live in!—I am now to take up my Pen again! But I am in a sad Taking truly! Another puzzling Tryal, to be sure!" (*Pamela* 115), the language clues the reader in to her thoughts and emotions given the exclamations she makes, and the undertones of a sadness felt through what society means for females. This confusion she feels is her mind beginning to change as she is confronted with a

situation that she was not prepared for. And given the necessity to begin writing again not only to her parents but to her readers as well, Pamela places emphasis on this action and causes an emotional connection that can only be felt through her letters, similarly to Clarissa's mad papers. B. L. Reid takes a different approach to this notion that I have been attempting to prove as he is criticizing the falseness that Richardson places in his texts. The implications that Reid pursues fail to place history with text and Richardson's emulation of the two; as Reid believes that, "There is much that is patently unreal in *Pamela*, and we should begin by noticing its worst sins of falseness to life. These occur mainly in habits of style and of characterization" (Reid 34). Although Reid's piece was written about 50 years ago and uninformed by many of the critiques used here, Reid still fails to acknowledge the importance of time and place that prompted the reason for *Pamela* to be written. *Pamela* was not written as a basis of the people Richardson observed, but based on the observation that Richardson had on the whole of society and the political and religious laws concerning patriarchy. The style and characterization in *Pamela* are the pivotal notions that shape Richardson's novel into an actual ideological standpoint and critique of society, however excessive they may be. Using this style of writing and creating characters that mirror customs of the eighteenth-century, Richardson finds his voice through these letters and crafts his characters into a critique of said customary tradition.

Richardson's critique of the English eighteenth-century becomes the defining factor in *Pamela* when Pamela attempts suicide. Although she was setting this act up to trick Mr. B—and make her escape, Pamela begins to make a shift that has been anticipated from the beginning of her captivity. The letters she wrote that led up to this point consisted of changes to her writing style and the way she presented herself to her parents as her mind was wearing down to the point of destruction. She writes to her parents that, "I can possibly have no Hope, no Desire of living

left me, because I cannot have the least Dependence, after what has pass'd, upon your solemn Assurances" (*Pamela* 117), which reveals a true loss of self and who Pamela once was under happier circumstances. The fact that Richardson attaches a type of emphasis to "Hope" and "Desire" shows a more profound look at those two words as they seem to be feelings that Pamela once had before her capture and a mental shift towards the atrocities that surround her. This is followed closely by the moment she attempts to take her own life in the pond by writing, "And to thy Providence, O my gracious God, commit the rest!—Once more, God bless you both! and send us a happy Meeting; if not here, in his heavenly Kingdom. Amen" (*Pamela* 169), which is reminiscent of a eulogy and a farewell to her parents. Under these circumstances, Pamela has lost the will to live and retain any type of life she once had before being subjected to Mr. B—'s patriarchal and mind warping pursuits. Only a few pages later does Pamela reveal this further based on her feeling, "with a Mind just broken, and a Heart sensible to nothing but the extremest Woe and Dejection" (*Pamela* 175) which, again, creates a sense of emphasis on the words "Woe" and "Dejection" that have now overtaken her life and results in her letters being the vessel that houses her thoughts, feelings and self.

With our capacity as readers to emotionally connect with the characters presented in any work of literature, we become the prime target for Pamela's descent into conforming to Mr. B—'s and society's expectations for wifedom. Readers inhabit this space alongside Pamela as either readers of the eighteenth-century who experience similar notions that Richardson constructs from reality; or, as contemporary readers, who can understand the emotional trauma inflicted on Pamela and therefore on the females of eighteenth-century England. In order for this shared experience to work, however, it is important that Pamela's trial is placed carefully in her letters for readers to be able to sympathize with and gain this emotional understanding. Alan McKillop

writes about a corresponding notion in which readers become the target and play a vital role with Pamela as a character: “Such a record gives the reader a continuous and cumulative impression of living through the experience, and thus creates a new kind of sympathy with the character whose experiences are being shared” (McKillop 29). The impressionistic factor of Pamela's letters becomes grounds for reader engagement, whether in an analytical sense or one that involves an emotional connection to sympathize with. It would appear that through the usage of the epistolary genre, Richardson was able to compile what he observed in everyday English customs and traditions and mold these perspectives into the letters presented in his novel.

Although Pamela, and by proxy Richardson, allows us to see Pamela's letters, this is the ground from which the writer to the receiver of the letters was considered sacred and a place of privacy. Letters were a place for the writer to house their thoughts and feelings with the intent that only the receiver would read them after being sealed. Pamela, therefore, becomes very attached to her letters based on this ideal as shown through her dictating, “So I took out my Papers; and said, Here, Sir, they are. But, if you please to return them, without breaking the Seal, it will be very generous: And I will take it for a great Favour, and a good Omen” (*Pamela* 239). The fact that she brings up not wanting the seal broken shows her representation of body in this letter. As stated previously, if the letter was broken into by someone who is not the intended recipient, then not only is it a breach of the letter, but a breach of the person as well. Of course, Mr. B— does break the seal, effectively breaching Pamela as the course of these actions have occurred across the novel, signifying the near rape and abuse scenes that happen closely thereafter. Jessica Leiman has written closely about Mr. B— and his controlling nature:

The point is not simply that Mr. B. cannot control Pamela's ‘bold’ writing, particularly her correspondence with another man instead of him; nor is it that her transcription and

interrogation of his language tend to underscore the failure of his words, exposing the discrepancy between his self-serving rhetoric and his lascivious intent. (Leiman 238)

Leiman concludes that Mr. B— is sexually compromised through Pamela denying him and his charm, which ties into Mr. B—’s aggressive fashion which stems from his sexual frustration as well as his jealousy of Williams. Mr B—’s fast aggression not only shows his controlling nature, but also censors Pamela in her motives of choosing another male in her right of free choice. Even though Richardson made it unclear if Pamela wished to pursue and eventually marry Williams, the important context to pull from Leiman's article is that language revolves and is so profoundly ingrained within the narrative that in order for that language to be understood, the character must first be understood through the ideological and rhetorical thought process involved. The rhetoric, therefore, would remain meaningless to the wider societal relation that Richardson was aiming for through the epistolary genre if the rhetoric was not present.

As the novel progresses towards the end, Pamela's conversion begins to happen at a rapid rate. Although Richardson makes it unclear where and why this change happened in context of the plot, I believe it is because of the traumatic experiences that Mr. B— inflicted on Pamela. Through her letters this change is prevalent as her state of mind becomes more submissive and passive towards the idea of marriage. Although Pamela is far past the beginning stages of a mental conversion caused by Mr. B—'s abusive persistence, there is still some remnant of Pamela left as she notices, “I could only make a Curchee, when they asked me; tho’, I am sure, my Heart was readier than my Speech, and answer’d to every Article of obey, serve, love and honour” (*Pamela* 344-45). She notes that she is locked into submission and is confused by what this means towards herself and the fight she nobly put forth; however, through her words, it seems that this is a battle she cannot win. She feels this so deeply within herself that her words

do not yet truly reflect how her mind is processing this outcome. Nancy Armstrong touches on this idea of a forced mental conversion because of Mr. B— and, therefore, society's expectations when she believes that, “Despite all Richardson does to assure us that Mr. B. underwent a moral conversion, Pamela’s shift from resistance to complicity with her seducer would have been one and the same thing as ‘going native’ in the tradition of the captivity narrative” (Armstrong 31).

As stated throughout this chapter, Richardson's wishes were to have the customs and traditions of eighteenth-century English society relevant to the patriarchal expectation of state, church and family be simulated in *Pamela*. These institutions envisioned females to follow said patriarchal customs and Richardson used this as the basis of critique and observation. Even though Armstrong utilizes the theme of captivity in *Pamela*, the issue still arises that there is rarely a moral conversion within captive narratives where the captor becomes aware of the injustices done to the captive and decides to pursue a more chaste outlook. And although an agreement occurs about Pamela's captivity under Mr. B— and society, it becomes problematic to write that Richardson believed that Mr. B— had a change in self.

To continue Armstrong’s point, within her text *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*, Armstrong’s focus is on the body of women within fiction and their own representation of a deeper, more ingrained patriarchal political system that seeped its way into eighteenth-century fiction in England. Within my own work, my synecdoche of Pamela’s body being that of her letters, or rather, her letters creating a nexus between her own body and mind, shares a similar point to Armstrong’s assumption of the transformation in Pamela’s language and body into what Mr. B— expects of her. Armstrong writes that, “Mr. B’s attempt to penetrate a servant girl’s material body magically transforms that body into one of language and emotion, into a metaphysical object that can be acquired only through her consent and his willingness to

adhere to the procedures of modern love” (Armstrong 5-6), which unravels Pamela’s own psyche during the process of her capture under Mr. B—. Pamela’s transformation into conformity can only be recreated through her thoughts being imprinted within the language and letters she pens. This nexus that Armstrong writes of relies heavily on what love defined itself as during the eighteenth-century, and what cultural contexts create Richardson’s novel through the connections of patriarchy and marriage, dominance and submissive, and most imperatively to fiction’s sake, language and emotion. All of these connections create Richardson’s novel as a way to show the feminine struggle against patriarchy and the unavoidable psychological conformance and breakdown that happens henceforth because of it.

Because Mr. B— is becoming everything Pamela’s life now revolves around, and because he has now asserted his dominance within her letters and nearly upon Pamela herself, Mr. B—’s plan of conforming Pamela is at its end point. Armstrong draws her point further of the desire in fiction and the impact that society’s view of women had in fiction, by placing the importance on Pamela’s emotional responses within her letters. Pamela’s letters and journals are the window through which readers, her parents and Mr. B— can witness Pamela’s downward spiral into a product of her age and someone whose internal prospects have been erased to serve the expectation that eighteenth-century society held over females. Armstrong continues by revealing how, “Mr. B now possesses the means of insinuating himself into the most private recesses of her emotions through reports on her every word and gesture, as well as through the record of her emotional experience contained in her letters” (Armstrong 123), showing how Pamela’s language is reaching the point of conversion given the emotional distress within her letters. Armstrong’s approaches in her seminal text have been avidly creating this link between society’s view of females being shown and mirrored within the texts released during the

eighteenth-century, and *Pamela* and *Clarissa* have been no exception to this. The nexus I have been arguing for bases itself on the reliance of a letter needing to encase and develop a character's internal struggles into words in which other characters can visualize as most cannot be present for the physical occurrence. The physical nature that connects with the mental and emotional nature of Richardson's text and the one that Pamela writes herself are paramount in completing this nexus between mind and body within Pamela's letters; and its emergence because of a patriarchal society that can cause a dismantling of a feminine mind into a conversion towards wifhood.

Similarly to Armstrong's approach, Margaret Doody's focus within her text *A Natural Passion* compiles the passionate nature found within *Pamela* and *Clarissa* and its relevance to the societal outlook towards what was considered natural and what was not. To further Doody's research, the naturalness that pairs itself within the characters in *Pamela* and *Clarissa* are important to note: whether it is Mr. B— finding it natural to contort Pamela into a wife, or Robert Lovelace believing he has the right to marry Clarissa. However, both of these factors result in both Pamela and Clarissa receiving psychological damage enough to either convert them fully into wifhood or kill them entirely like in Clarissa's case. Doody notes that “Richardson does not advocate the levelling of social classes, but he makes a strong claim for human equality—the equality of souls before God is shown as implying that individual emotional and moral life has an absolute value to which social distinctions are irrelevant” (Doody 44) which does create this nexus between mind and body to letter writing within *Pamela*. Richardson was not so much trying to change how society functioned, but rather through the nexus Pamela embedded within her written language to show what issues he had with the treatment of women under patriarchy. Pamela's morals and virtues based on how she was raised

under her parents are increasingly evident throughout the course of the novel. But as the novel proceeds, much of that desire to maintain virtue and morals is supplanted by the changes that Mr. B— forces upon Pamela.

To argue Doody's point further, these changes that erase Pamela's sense of self become the crux of the novel, showing the effect and power males and society have over eighteenth-century women and wives. It appears this structure of society is what is considered natural to those living in England during the eighteenth-century which helps Richardson write *Pamela* as a novel to perhaps guide people into a more moral outlook when dealing with thoughts of patriarchy and male dominance. Doody, just as many authors will argue, believes that Mr. B— changes rather than Pamela as shown how, "it is the force of femininity which defeats Mr. B. or, alternatively, brings him to victory by making him acknowledge the softer side of his own nature" (Doody 49), while I do not see a "softer side" to the dominating nature at the end of the novel given Mr. B—'s actions and own language throughout the course of the novel. Instead, I believe that it is Pamela who has changed and been coerced from a girl of lower class into a wife of upper class through the constant advances, whether physical or emotional, that Mr. B— forced upon her since their first recorded interaction in the novel. The natural passion that imbues Mr. B— as a character is that of what I stated previously, the natural capacity for men to dominate and follow what patriarchal standards were expected during the eighteenth-century. The passion shown, in both society and in Mr. B— could almost appear mechanical and serving the purpose of state and church rather than one of a passionate response which would appear later once the population came to approve of a more companionate style marriage.

Based on Pamela's loss of self due to her fight for independence, a closer feminist look is pertinent in Pamela's outcome towards the end of the novel. Although ideas of independence

and liberty were only beginning to find a place in the minds of eighteenth-century women, much of Pamela's fight and resistance to Mr. B— can be seen in this light. Even though it wouldn't be until the end of the eighteenth-century when Mary Wollstonecraft would write *Vindication of the Rights of Women* as the century's most explicit feminist manifesto, it appears that Richardson was toying with this idea when he chose to write *Pamela*. Who Pamela is as a character and her reflection of similar situations that females dealt with in a patriarchal society create this sense of a strong feminist presence in the way that Richardson viewed society. This social outlook for classes to retain any sense of a patriarchal upbringing comes from society's reasoning of, as Roy Porter had written, the noticeable social functions that females/males and wives/husbands played within society. These roles are very fixed not only in eighteenth-century custom but within the literature found at the time, which Richardson was ultimately looking at and utilizing for his own telling of a patriarchal institution that brought on the ideological context he writes in. It is clear as to Richardson's aim with *Pamela* as being an attempted, but failed movement towards an absolute reasoning and a desire for a more feminist outlook within society and in literature.

Similarly, Richardson's outlook on a male-driven society creates this result of change of personality and sensation in Pamela that ends up defining her mental state. As Pamela experiences a conversion into the marriage life, the questioning and confusion that were once a part of her slowly dissipate and leave behind a social product constructed by Mr. B—'s brute force. Through Pamela's letters, the reader can gain this insight as her change in stylization is altered: "For Yesterday I was happily marry'd to the best of Gentlemen, yours and my beloved Master. I have only now to tell you, that I am inexpressibly happy: That my generous Benefactor denies me nothing, and even anticipates my Wishes" (*Pamela* 361). This comment relies on Richardson envisioning Pamela as a changed person, altered ultimately for the worse, as

her statements that follows this change in characterization happen after her attempted suicide and her broken state given her abusive captor. With words such as "Gentlemen" and "beloved," there is a clearer truth that the girl Pamela once was has exited her letters and has been replaced with a reproduction or reworking of a character based on her thoughts and feelings turning into a more passive and submissive state. Another telling state is the fact that Pamela still refers to Mr. B—as master even though she has changed status from maid servant to wife, which is indicative of all wives under patriarchy and forced to submit to a male influence. The usage of the word master is Richardson utilizing the written rhetorical language to represent the submission and ruled self that is now Pamela. With this passivity in mind, there becomes a ground in which an interjection of feminist rhetoric can support and appeal to this sense of thought and feeling that Pamela is now accustomed to.

This acclimatization is Richardson's critique of what eighteenth-century society spelled out for females who were beginning to become available for marriage and being subjected to a patriarchal culture. This can be paired with much of what Hélène Cixous writes about the capacity of differences found in gendered spheres of living: "A male privilege, which can be seen in the opposition by which it sustains itself, between activity and passivity. Traditionally, the question of sexual difference is coupled with the same opposition: activity/passivity" (Cixous 360). Mr. B—'s activity in his sphere is what transforms Pamela into a passive and submissive girl. The passivity does not rely on the thought process of starting a happily married life, but rather one that has been forced through abusive trauma shaping Pamela's mind into what Mr. B— expects her to be. Both of these oppositions that Cixous writes about are mirrored directly in Mr. B—'s and Pamela's letters as the way her father, mother and readers gain this notion through the thoughts and feelings that represent the self that Mr. B— and Pamela put forth

through their letters. It is these letters that are a basis for a feminist critique that spawns from Richardson as the author and the audience, whether female or male, as the conduit for this critique.

This critique that is shown through Pamela and her story reflects Richardson's usage of a historical connection through customary eighteenth-century tradition. Since Pamela's mind has now become molded as a product of the eighteenth-century, she is now the mirrored image of who eighteenth-century wives were under patriarchy. Much of this mirrored image deals with Pamela's rise from lower to upper class when she marries Mr. B—, but it is also the societal expectation of a patriarchal household forced on Pamela that involves the greater portion of her mental and physical conversion. Roy Porter brings a similar notion to life again of Richardson's societal rhetoric as, "In a man's world it is not surprising that a lady parroted her master's voice. Most found that if they acquiesced and worked the system, they could exercise considerable power within their own allotted spheres" (Porter 23) and although Pamela does not find power in submission but rather attempts to have power through defiance, there is still a social and political nexus between a character's mind and body that Richardson took into consideration. Given the historical timing in which *Pamela* was written and Richardson's constant usage of history in his novels; it would therefore make sense to have a novel like *Pamela* so concentrated on patriarchy and the plight that all females went through as a result of this. It would also be important to note that both spheres of sexes are accurately represented through the letters that Pamela and Mr. B— write, both creating what a female sphere would contain, something of a passive or resistant nature toward marriage, and the male sphere containing a nature of oppression and sexual ambition based on the middle stages of the eighteenth-century in which *Pamela* was set in.

Given this historical context for *Pamela*, the letters and journals that create the novel imply not only the changes of Pamela, but also what thought process, sense of self, and feelings emerged as a result of this proven mental trauma. With such an in-depth focus on virtue and purity that the eighteenth-century held over the female population, it would make sense that Richardson infused these ideals into the letters he wanted to represent the personal self of the letter writer. Thomas Keymer, in the introduction to the Oxford World's Classics edition of *Pamela*, makes sure to touch on this sense of England as a place that was dominated by a patriarchal system: "Unsystematically, though with clarity enough, a subtext begins to emerge in which Mr. B.'s maltreatment of Pamela reflects oppositional allegations about ministerial exploitation of the nation" (Keymer xix). Through Keymer's stance on the political spectrum of eighteenth-century England, a reflection due to Richardson's ambition as a writer continues to be revealed through the letters that Pamela and Mr. B— transcribe. These letters help to retain what England defined itself as at the time and allows readers to uncover this through how Pamela and Mr. B— create their own nexus of self through their writing and rhetoric. Ian Watt constructs a similar notion in that, "it derives from the fact that these social and psychological changes go far to explain two of the major qualities posed by *Pamela*: its formal unity, and its peculiar combination of moral purity and impurity" (Watt 42). This argument helps complete a more vivid picture of Richardson as an artist. He combines the two elements of society and psychology for the reader to understand how both impacted the way Pamela was written as a character and the eventual outcome of her change in mentality. Although Watt's assessment of *Pamela* does not rely on letter writing, his argument still creates the sense of Richardson telling Pamela's journey into the high life through her letters which become a housing of her nexus of self through the written rhetoric she produces.

To continue with Keymer's approaches to *Pamela*, in his text *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader*, Keymer's short section on *Pamela* directs the reader focus on Pamela's writing rather than her emotion and gives arguments for both sides of Pamela's character: whether the reader should or shouldn't believe her. Because Richardson chose to write in the epistolary format, it becomes at the reader's own discretion to be persuaded or not by the heroine's rhetoric, almost mirroring what reading correspondence was during the eighteenth-century and how the letter receiver would make similar conclusions as well. Keymer writes how Pamela's "letters propose an utterly uncomplicated view of the relation between self and text, and ask to be read as little less than her own interior life displayed in conveniently legible form" (Keymer 19), showing Pamela's usage of rhetoric when writing to her parents and her readers as well. Pamela carefully lays out her situation and self through the nexus she creates between mind and body, hoping to circumvent any need for her parents or readers to actually be present. Because of this, and the one-sided events, I can understand Keymer's assertion in questioning Pamela's motives, but it still remains that much of Richardson's own writing was a product of society's own conformance and view of patriarchy. Although Pamela's own telling of events can be questioned, she can still be envisioned as a female under distress from a male captor, and this duress is slowly transforming and shifting Pamela into wifehood.

In addition, as Pamela completes her conversion of self into a patriarchal template, she loses and forgets everything that has once been a part of her struggle and ideology which causes each character to forget the same except for Lady Davers. Mr. B—'s sister, even after witnessing Pamela's change in mental state, continues to fight for Pamela and the rights she knows all females should have. In consequence, Mr. B— does not allow Pamela to speak but now speaks for her as he notes to his sister to, "See, said he, her Condition has not altered her; but I cannot

permit in her a Conduct unworthy of my Wife, and I hope my Sister would not expect it neither” (*Pamela* 427). This speech not only demonstrates Mr. B—'s newfound power as a husband, but also reveals that his and Pamela's language are now intertwined. Pamela following Mr. B—'s wants and parroting his voice, as Porter wrote, shows two selves being brought into one through their actions and their letters. This idea, however, is counteracted by Yanhong Fan who believes there is a disconnection between self and letters as Fan writes, “Pamela creates her narrative in her letters, and this narrative reveals a distinct separation between her unconscious and social selves. Mr. B. recognizes the dichotomy between Pamela's selves and attempts to help her see it as well” (Fan 455). Fan's statement takes a more passive approach to the novel and does not assess the issue of Pamela's change being a result of Mr. B—'s constant mental and physical abuse that forced Pamela to change in the first place. This trauma had been placed into the narrative since Mr. B— first appeared in the novel and Pamela chronicles this for her parents and readers, inscribing this idea into her letters that distinctly shows the connection between self and the written form. If there was a separation of the unconscious from a person's social self, then everything that Richardson had written within Pamela would be forfeit, with no reason to write what I have been providing thus far.

Furthermore, Pamela and Mr. B— become these connections that readers use in order to fully understand and sympathize with each character in *Pamela*. It seems, thus far, Richardson's intent with his novel was an understanding of the power that epistolary literature builds itself on through its connections from character to reader within a letter format. As emphasized previously, the language of Pamela and Mr. B— defines this prospect of reader connection and because of the rhetoric of both characters, we as readers can become part of the characters' situations and emotionally understand why this story was important for Richardson to write in

terms of the political and social context of the eighteenth-century. Heidi Giles uses this sense of language in *Pamela* and the effects it has over the characters as language is created, “to empower their heroines while still emphasizing the sacrifice—the potential dissolution and disintegration of identity—that lurks behind every resolve” (Giles 77). This disappearance of identity is found drastically in *Pamela* over the course of the novel as she begins her shift as her mentality breaks down and reverts to society's and Mr. B—'s expectations of an eighteenth-century wife. I would argue, however, that language gives Richardson more power than *Pamela* as he is the one that is creating her story and using this power to tell of a larger issue within a patriarchal society. However, Giles continues to write about the winning nature of *Pamela* and the conversion of Mr. B— to a better person which does ultimately not seem true as the novel concludes with the exact opposite of Giles assertion. It would appear that Mr. B— is the one that is victorious in the mental conversion that he achieved over *Pamela*, effectively dissolving her person and creating another product of wifedom during the eighteenth-century.

To conclude this chapter, Richardson created *Pamela* out of a desire to write about his observations of a deeply patriarchal society that placed custom over feminine independence. Through the letters that *Pamela* writes, the reader can understand her mind and how her mind correlates and constructs the body of *Pamela* as these attributes reflect the self. Although authors like B.L. Reid and Yanhong Fan disagree with the concept of *Pamela* being a reflection of society and focus on the falsities that Richardson wrote about, it is still clear that morality makes up a large part of the novel. Whether this is *Pamela* retaining morality or having a morality be gained from eighteenth-century society, it becomes a standpoint in the novel that creates the way Richardson wrote. David Daiches writes extensively about Richardson's usage of morality within *Pamela* and the ways it centers itself as the pointedness of the novel through the letters

documented. Daiches relates this to the historical context when *Pamela* was written as Richardson's "volume of model letters reveals, or at least suggests, the moral world in which his novels take place. It is a world in which relationships are the first importance" (Daiches 18). Daiches shows the priority that patriarchal thought had in the lives of society as marriage was viewed as the means to continue what customs and traditions remained important to England. The moral thought that was so heavily ingrained within eighteenth-century society was critiqued to Richardson's best ability to show what societal expectations turned Pamela into. Richardson ends his novel in his own voice and tells the reader that, "For is not a wife the keeper of a man's honour? And do not her faults bring more disgrace upon a husband than even upon herself?" (*Pamela* 427); completing the cycle that began his novel, Richardson offers a true to life account of what a male dominated society held over women, and the ways in which it forced them into dependence rather than independence.

Chapter III: The Psychological Implications of a Patriarchal Courtship System in *Clarissa*

Seven years after Richardson's critical success with *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*, he continued these deeper themes of a patriarchal struggle and the embodiment of self when he wrote *Clarissa; or, the History of a Young Lady*. From the outset of the novel, Richardson writes of familial control and the power Clarissa's parents have over her, indicative of the patriarchal struggle many women dealt with during the eighteenth-century. Richardson begins his novel with not only the thought of another estate added to the Harlowe family name, but of a courtship between their eldest daughter Arabella Harlowe and Robert Lovelace. This is the reader's introduction to Robert Lovelace and sets his character up as detestable and an unconformable rake. Because of Arabella's repulsion of Lovelace, and Lovelace's new found desire for Arabella's younger sister Clarissa, Lovelace begins a pursuit in attempts to win over Clarissa. James Sr. and Charlotte Harlowe both take note of what they think of as Clarissa and Robert Lovelace's interest in one another and formulate a way of denying them the courtship they believe they want by having Roger Solmes, a man of the upper class, asserted as a potential husband for Clarissa. By beginning his novel in this way, Richardson is already making the statement about the struggle between females and their choice in partners as both of these men were forced on both sisters. This will soon change as Lovelace begins to sway towards Clarissa in the unstoppable lust and passion that creates his character.

In contrast to *Pamela*, Richardson focuses on the familial sense of power in *Clarissa* as much of the novel is centered on Clarissa's struggle with her own parents and her wish for an independent choice in who she marries. In relation to the power of parents, Toni Bowers lays out the eighteenth-century outlook on patriarchy by commenting on the power that comes from

being a father and husband. Power is also found alongside the eldest sons and uncles who have the authority to control younger children and wives. Wives and mothers also had some power but only in certain situations, which is the situation Clarissa finds herself in during these early stages of the novel (“Family” 239). Richardson places both a historical importance in *Clarissa* and also utilizes the epistolary format for a written nexus to be created to represent Clarissa through the construction of her letters. Richardson combines both history and feeling together in order to tell the story of Clarissa and her plight against patriarchy. In the guise of the editor, as typical for Richardson, the author lays out this fact in his preface found in the Penguin edition to *Clarissa*: “Letters on both sides are written while the hearts of the writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their subjects: the events at the time generally dubious—so that they abound not only with critical situations, but with what may be called instantaneous descriptions and reflections” (*Clarissa* 36). This engagement that Clarissa takes in writing her history rings true with eighteenth-century England and societal expectations, which shows Richardson’s infusion of these differing elements. It would seem that Richardson chose to preface his novel in a way that accurately creates the sense that he hinted at in *Pamela*: his novels and history align themselves through the letters that his characters write as a way to create an imagined nexus of their minds and bodies through their situation.

To further Clarissa’s plight, Clarissa is constantly pressured by her older brother James Jr. to marry Roger Solmes as the law allowed James and his father to do. This familial push becomes problematic for Clarissa as the repeated advances her family takes continuously deny her growing assertion of her right of sovereignty of self. Much of these decisions were based on monetary reasoning rather than the happiness of their daughter: according to Roy Porter, “Inheritance was paramount in a legal system in which male primogeniture ensured that estates

were not broken up" (Porter 56). Primogeniture is used to exercise power over Clarissa, but ultimately fails as she is the rightful heir of her Grandfather's estate through the Will he left behind. Her Grandfather's Will is a legal and binding contract with Clarissa in order for her to inherit the estate she is promised. Although James Sr. threatens Clarissa in accordance with the dictates of primogeniture unless she marries Roger Solmes, he fails to persuade Clarissa with this act which is why her family chooses physical and emotional methods in upcoming letters to break down her stubbornness. Much of the Harlowe's failed attempts at enacting primogeniture and other persuasive methods is located throughout Clarissa's writing to Miss Howe, where her letters show her emotional situation and the struggle she is experiencing: "His courtship, indeed, is to them; and my brother pretends to court me as his proxy, truly! I utterly to my brother refuse his application" (*Clarissa* 62). This snippet of Clarissa's letter shows James Jr.'s influence over the family and what rights eighteenth-century law allowed him to have. Clarissa's written language speaks for her feelings while also revealing a very real and concrete example of eighteenth-century society and what was forced on upper-or middle-class females who may have chosen a more independent nature. With this overarching male dominance that Clarissa writes about in relation to her brother, she is not only questioning societal law, but also what emotional impact her family choosing class over happiness could eventually result in.

Similarly, James Sr. and James Jr. call upon Clarissa's favorite uncle as a way to push her further into submission of her courtship and marriage to Solmes. At first Clarissa's uncle believes it is her right to choose who she wants to marry, as shown through Clarissa writing: "My uncle Harlowe, it seems, is against driving me upon extremities; but his unbrotherly nephew has engaged that the regard I have for my reputation and my principles will bring me round to my duty, that's the expression" (*Clarissa* 65); however, the uncle's view changes over the course

of the novel as he too, begins to pressure Clarissa into not resisting her father's wishes. This plot begins to make a change in Clarissa's thoughts and feelings toward her situation. At first she seems to believe her family will change their mind and submit to her views on virtue and choice; however, this does not seem the case and it affects Clarissa's mind shortly into the novel, unlike Pamela who had some time before she was affected by Mr. B—. Clarissa acknowledges her shift in mentality to Anna Howe in another letter shortly after the one shown previously as she notes that, "I cannot tell what turn my mind had taken to dictate so oddly to my pen" (*Clarissa* 72). It is at this point where Clarissa's mental state begins to deteriorate as she questions why her feelings are swaying toward a depressive nature. Clarissa does not fully understand these feelings as they are new to her in what was once a relatively stable household that is now infected with emotionally violent tendencies unfelt before.

This conflict that Clarissa faces reveals itself to her readers as we are allowed into her letters and what her mind and emotions are relating to us. Through this sympathy, readers begin to feel for Clarissa and her plight as it calls into question Richardson's historical motives for doing so. With this reality in mind, Nancy Armstrong brings up a valid point in her critique, "Writing Women and the Making of the Modern Middle Class," which delves into the idea of captivity in *Clarissa*. Her assessment of *Clarissa* takes both a historical and a psychological look into the context of Clarissa's state of mind under her captivity by her family and Robert Lovelace. Armstrong uses her historical critique as relevance toward an eighteenth-century family found in *Clarissa* by noting, "As the figure that brought ties to her original family into her husband's household, the married daughter embodied the conflict between household and family" (Armstrong 40). Armstrong's assessment of a married daughter mirroring the issues that arise from the patriarchal capacity created through the household space, complements

Richardson's notion of what he witnessed throughout society and reflected on when writing *Clarissa*. This conflict that Clarissa faces is in direct relation to her family's physical presence within the household, as well as the language her family attempts to use in order for a rhetorical conversion to happen within Clarissa into compliance with the familial desire of a marriage to Solmes. Her constant denying of a conversion of mind to occur, however, results in her captivity—in both her physical room and in her own mind, only allowing the readers and Anna Howe into her deteriorating mental state. This disintegration of Clarissa's mind based on her family's repeated advances of maltreatment create this connection between Clarissa's mind and emotion in the wider context of eighteenth-century society and its own maltreatment of females under patriarchy, establishing further this nexus of self I am arguing.

In addition, it is these verbally violent tendencies that bring Clarissa's language into her writing before she experiences her forced solitude in her room and her eventual entrapment in Mrs. Sinclair's bordello. The importance that Richardson placed on language stems largely from its capacity to hold power over people, which can be seen as Clarissa writes that she is to be “as dependent upon my papa's will as a daughter ought to be who knows not what is good for herself. This is the language of the family now” (*Clarissa* 80). By Richardson creating the allusion between patriarchy and language, the relevance of the Harlowe family language mirrors what actions the eighteenth-century is expecting and forcing on a daughter to commit without question becomes increasingly apparent. The fact that the Harlowes are mirroring patriarchal language during the eighteenth-century shows England's expected structuring of lives and what customs should be emulated within each family or person. This written nexus that links Clarissa's thoughts and feelings to a wider societal critique, creates our own connections

between Clarissa's resistance to her family's wishes and her independent struggle of attaining what she feels is her right in choice in marriage.

Richardson's usage of family is much more prominent in *Clarissa* than in *Pamela* as he was expanding more on the idea of patriarchy within a familial household rather than focusing on the advances of a male seeking to become a husband. It becomes more relevant for the reader to take note of the underlying causes that compelled Richardson to re-create a scenario based around what he observed in society. In *Samuel Richardson in Context*, Toni Bowers gives credence to the notion of family in her chapter, "Family" showing that class and ideological values became foregrounded in creating the Harlowes and their expectation of submission on Clarissa's part. Bowers carries this sentiment forth as she avidly believes how, "Representations of family life are never merely metaphors for something else in Richardson, but they nevertheless carry broad resonances for other kinds of power relations in eighteenth-century British society" (242); which helps create this sense of the empowerment of England as a nation and the effects that language reflected on its people. The power that society had over people allowed Richardson to place the strength of society forwardly in *Clarissa*, which broadened his scope as an author and observer. By writing this custom in Clarissa's letters and situation, Richardson was able to complete his connection between reader and character leading to a sympathetic and more focused understanding of Clarissa's mental state during her mistreatment by her family.

Moreover, it is Clarissa's traumatized and self-referential language that is a direct result of this problematic familial language that is forced on her. It is notable the effect that verbal and written language had on Richardson's telling of Clarissa's story and the importance it had on understanding Clarissa's self, motives and situation. Richardson's critical outlook defined his

novels and his writing style in a deeper ideological sense as a critique of English society. Christina Gillis agrees with Richardson as well as she writes, "It is a concern with language itself—how it orders our lives, our relationships, and our families—that we find in epistolary manuals and miscellanies" (86). This structure that is important to Gillis creates our and Richardson's understanding of what eighteenth-century society meant and furthers the impact society had on literature and females struggling with ideological concepts of patriarchal tradition. Clarissa's family and how they order their lives is seen throughout Clarissa's letters, shaping our reading experience and her own life under an oppressive family. Clarissa's letters reveal the emotional impact of her family upon her through her writing style: "If two or three letters reach you together, they will but express, from one period to another, the anxieties and difficulties which the mind of your unhappy, but ever affectionate friend labours under" (*Clarissa* 113). Richardson, as in *Pamela*, continues his style of placing emphasis on key words such as "anxieties" and "difficulties" to explicate Clarissa's mental state at the time of her writing this letter. Through her anxieties and the difficulties it produces, allows us as modern day readers to better understand and link ourselves to an emotion that is familiar and prevalent across all time periods.

It is my belief that Clarissa's letters begin to become surrogates for her person and mirror the trials she is facing under her oppressive family. As shown in previous letters, Clarissa's language, letters, and even the select words she chooses that are being accounted and retold to Anna Howe are constant reminders of her questioning societal and customary traditions that solidified patriarchy in the eighteenth-century. Marta Kvande continues to write of the critical notions of mind and body found in epistolary fiction that help draw out a more sympathetic connection between reader and character. Clarissa's nexus through her letters is a direct result of

her solitude and as she focuses on the fact that she is trapped within her room and the situation she is in, she becomes more depressed: “The more she writes, the more she will feel what she writes (as she writes what she feels), and the more trapped by that emotion she will become” (247), Kvande writes. Clarissa’s failing mental state is not only through herself, but also as the result of her parents’ patriarchal tendencies for achieving what they feel is right. Clarissa becomes her pen and letters as she places her mind within every word she writes—whether to Anna Howe, her parents or her siblings—which helps to define for readers her shift from happiness to sadness. Christina Gillis continues to draw on this similar sense of isolation causing Clarissa’s traumatic mindset: “A metaphorical use of setting is seen in Clarissa too, when Richardson places his heroine in a locked room, completely cut off from a public street, and indicates that Clarissa’s moral struggle will be played out within her own consciousness” (18). This here-and-now writing found in *Clarissa* shows the situational value that comes with a deeper and psychological look into Clarissa’s mind as it begins to sway further away from who she once was. Because of her entrapment by her parents within her room, this isolates her problem further as she is left to her own thoughts; reflecting on them in a written form, which results in her rationalization of this very real situation that she cannot escape.

To capture the essence of this building psychological trauma in Clarissa, I believe a closer look at Margaret Anne Doody’s text, *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson* is pertinent for a re-visit and evaluation. Doody’s focus on trauma and its relation to a type of anti-love that is prominent throughout Richardson’s texts, and help visualize the psyche of females that are thrown into what parents and England require love to mean and its lasting effects of conformity to that very same system. At this point in the novel, Richardson is heightening the reader’s response to Clarissa’s persuasive writing when telling of her situation

and how it is affecting her mentality as a daughter under a repressive family. Doody sheds light on this case by infusing both Clarissa's mind and its relation to her bodily reactions towards her isolation and trauma: "The stress of family warfare and of her own efforts to do well by all takes its toll in nervousness and (psychologically well observed) in afflictions of the digestive system" (Doody 103). Doody's rationale here emerges from the pre-existing social expectation I have been attempting to prove over the course of my research, insofar as, Clarissa is utilizing her own language to explicate the nexus she wishes to relate through her mind and body becoming what is essentially written in her letters. Clarissa's mind and body are one in the same here as her mental state is what is and will be causing further damage to her body as she begins to show a lack of motivation of physically caring for herself that is required to sustain life.

Doody's ideological standpoint of Richardson's moment-to-moment writing being created for an ontological sense through Clarissa and other character's letters being read and referenced throughout the text itself, bring a pre-existing patriarchal society into being for the reader to see. Because society preceded *Clarissa* and eighteenth-century society is what Richardson was observing, it is important to note the claims of Richardson's disavowal of patriarchy are being networked through Clarissa's writing and emotions. The only way Clarissa's thoughts and feelings can be experienced by us as the readers is through the sociological upbringing that patriarchy required of the eighteenth-century population. This is the natural passion that Doody writes of. It was natural for state and parents to view love as a cultural expectation that exists solely for parental desires for perhaps class or monetary reasons, which is seen explicitly in the Harlowes. Clarissa's trauma and progressively deteriorating mind becomes Richardson's vehicle for expressing his own thoughts and worries of what paths society

will continue to use in order to define a passionless love, rather than letting the feminine population have their own choice in defining love and its meaning through passion.

To conclude Doody's assessment of *Clarissa* and her trauma, Doody relates Clarissa's trauma to her surroundings, effectively creating a synthesis between the physical world around Clarissa and the emotional trauma that ensues because of it. As I have stated previously with the usage of Gillis, Richardson uses Clarissa's entrapment within her room and, eventually, in Mrs. Sinclair's bordello, as a way of reflecting an isolated mind. Clarissa is silenced through her physical surroundings and unable to communicate both verbally and through a written form to Anna Howe. Doody sheds light on environmental trauma metaphorically being Clarissa's internal struggle by relating how, "Rooms, walls, and doors reflect psychological states—the frustration of an effort to communicate, the endeavour to remain separated from another person, the attempt to erect or break down psychological barriers between personalities" (Doody 188). Doody's argument falls in line with my own usage of a written nexus that Clarissa links between her mind and body. Because Clarissa is silenced from both the outside and written world, she becomes repressed within her own inner world, establishing her growing trauma and inability to free herself from her restraints. These physical and mental restraints placed upon Clarissa by her family and, effectively, society as well, allows us as the reader to sense these connections as a much grander societal critique. To allow the reader to receive insight into a time period that thrived on patriarchal values and the depreciation of the feminine, provides us with a way to bridge the gap by understanding and feeling for Clarissa in her situation that is unraveling her psyche. However, soon after Clarissa's entrapment by her parents, they allow her exposure to the outside world again in the form of an occasional walk in the family's garden, a place that was once special to her and soon now to be another place of eventual trauma.

The next letters of the novel take place within the gardens of the Harlowe estate as Clarissa's parents allow her to walk the gardens under a watchful eye. It is this release that causes Clarissa to experience a break from her isolation of mind and self from the confines of her room. The garden is also an important setting in Richardson's novel as it is where Lovelace meets Clarissa for purposes of corresponding with her. With Lovelace's passion growing greater, Clarissa unwillingly meeting with him results in the Harlowe's garden becoming another place of eventual trauma. Clarissa writes about meeting with Lovelace to Anna Howe, showing a physical interaction affecting her writing style and mindset: "I got back without observation: but the apprehension that I should not, gave me great uneasiness; and made me begin my letter in a greater flutter" (*Clarissa* 172). Clarissa allowing her deeper emotions to flourish within her letters, places a greater import on the way she uses her written and rhetorical language to get her point across about her experiences becoming her writing through a repressive state. Clarissa's language continues to cause a connection between the reader and herself, whether in a physical or emotional surrounding, which allows us to bridge closer to her mind as she lets us into her mental state. Richardson uses this device as a way to tell Clarissa's story in a more complete fashion, bringing all aspects of self and place to Clarissa's journey; or, as Gillis notes, "the language of release denotes not only emotional, imaginative, even spiritual, process but also an awareness that experience is authenticated ultimately in a complete story" (119). We as readers start to become involved in Richardson's writing process, becoming a conduit to understanding a traumatized self in Clarissa under the patriarchal standpoint her parents take. This traumatic self in Clarissa effectively allows Richardson to gain his end of completing his goal of an observation of a societal custom that dominates a population's ideological values.

Richardson's ability as an author to create scenes that bring emotional connectivity between reader and text is done so through Richardson's capacity in establishing a link between scene and letter, letter and trauma. Clarissa re-living the enjoyment of her garden walks is her release from solitude and her own self-referential language that wears down her own mentality to the point of exhaustion. This garden scene not only shows Clarissa's emotional reprieve, but it also shows Clarissa's emotional trauma in letters to come; creating a type of parallax when viewed as a site of eventual trauma when being kidnapped, rather than a place of beauty that it once was. It is through Clarissa's thoughts and feelings that make this garden scene come alive and allow us as readers to view and understand this scene as a parallax: beauty turning to ugliness and safety turning to danger. It is this site in the gardens where Clarissa finds Lovelace waiting outside the walls of the gardens, ready to correspond with her in person and in writing. These gardens will soon come to represent Clarissa being unable to find peace in serenity as this notion is stripped from her as Lovelace will essentially kidnap her from this type of feeling, dismantling any thought of finding love and peace again. These gardens will time and time again result in a physical site of emotional trauma for Clarissa, shown through Richardson's own ability as an author to relate the mental to the physical through surroundings or even objects.

To continue, Kvande and Gillis's observations on usage of language and letters bringing forth both self and situation fall in line with my assertion of Clarissa's faltering mental state under her patriarchal parents. Clarissa's emotions resonate within each word she writes and letter she addresses, and readers can find these expressive emotions ingrained deep within Clarissa as they take precedence in her writing. Because Clarissa is barred from her parents until she submits to courtship and eventual marriage to Roger Solmes, Anna Howe is her only correspondent that she wishes to communicate with as she too, over the course of the novel,

understands Clarissa's plight. Still early in the novel, Clarissa writes to Miss Howe expressing how, "my sentences drag; my style creeps; my imagination is sunk; my spirit serves me not; only to tell you, what whether I have little or much, it is all devoted to the commands of my dear Miss Howe" (*Clarissa* 187): this phrasing corresponds actively with both my and Kvande's argument towards an emotional release through letters. These emotions drag and are stylized, however, from a more social issue of a patriarchal upbringing. Clarissa's problems stem from her want of independence in choice and a chance to reunite with her parents after her exile to her room which causes this longing for a free self. This issue also extends from her threatened loss of her Grandfather's estate that her parents have taken over and decide to leave unfulfilled unless she marries Solmes and cuts Lovelace from her life. James Jr. is largely in part of this threat as shown by his constant advances towards keeping the estate from her: "In a word, miss, it will be kept out of your hands, till my papa sees you discreet enough to have the management of it, or till you can dutifully, by law, tear it from him" (*Clarissa* 199). James Jr.'s language also reflects his own person and although this was stated directly to Clarissa, Clarissa's telling and writing of his language materializes James Jr.'s character for Anna Howe and us as the reader to envisage. James Jr. uses a word like "tear" to imply a sharpened feeling towards the reader for them to gain the harshness and violent nature of James Jr. James Jr.'s speech and Clarissa's relaying of their conversation invites us as readers to achieve an understanding for Clarissa and a potential detachment from her tenacious and unrelenting brother.

During Clarissa's time at Harlowe Place, most of this section of the novel concentrates on the interactions between Clarissa and her siblings, as her parents will not actively talk to her. While her mother is an exception, to a point, Clarissa is mainly writing to Anna Howe about the constant threatening advances by her siblings and Lovelace. These next letters centralize

themselves on the interaction between Clarissa and her brother James, as he attempts to force her to accept Roger Solmes or else forfeit their Grandfather's estate. This essence of who James Jr. is as a character stems from Clarissa's ability to relay these factors that create James to Anna Howe and to us as the readers as well. James Jr., however, does take strides to be the ruling patriarch of the family as he divides Clarissa and her family further as he controls their parents on a whim. Through the idea of James's control, Brian McCrea establishes the methods James begin to use to be the true patriarch of the family, taking over his father's voice and becoming the one who should be submitted to: "James Harlowe, Jr, while his father and uncles are alive, controls them (at least in Clarissa's account) and will make a marriage where he sees the family's advantage lies" (McCrea 129). McCrea's observation aligns itself with the rethinking of patriarchy as shown through James Jr.'s voice overtaking his parents. It is this silence that Clarissa's family enacts that represents the historical context that Richardson saw in a faulted patriarchal system. Although Richardson is telling this story through a new lens from *Pamela*, he seems to still be hinting at a desire for more choices to fall on the part of the daughters to be more actively involved with the marriage process. However, by Clarissa subverting primogeniture by inheriting her grandfather's estate, and James Jr. usurping his father's authority as head of the household, both siblings disrupt the feelings that society held towards patriarchy at the time *Clarissa* was written.

In addition, James Jr.'s attempts at swaying Clarissa's mind to conform to a more suitable representation of an eighteenth-century female shows his expectation for a submission to a male authority. He drastically takes charge and causes Clarissa's emotional state to wear down further, becoming distant from her original happy state. Through her correspondence to Anna Howe, Clarissa accurately writes in a manner that reflects her mentality and the situation she is

forced into as she expresses, “what have I to do with such headstrong spirits! I wish I had never—but what signifies wishing?—I am strangely perplexed—But I need not have told you this, after such a representation of my situation” (*Clarissa* 260). Clarissa commenting and rationalizing how she can accurately represent her situation in full detail also causes the idea to come to mind that her emotional state is carefully and clearly represented as well. Although Clarissa does not fully comment on her declining mental state, the implication is read through her speech and confusion towards herself and her family. The fact her father and brother are enacting a patriarchal pursuit of her conversion and submission to their will causes Clarissa’s letters and each word she writes to become more evocative of her mental state. Clarissa’s words also help create a connection between herself and Anna Howe, as they both understand each other’s emotions based on their close relationship and being daughters ruled by a controlling parent. It is both protagonists who allow their emotions to create this nexus of the here-and-now situation that Richardson wrote in *Clarissa* in order to show a more direct and convoluted society that he was observing.

Considering Clarissa’s confusion toward her situation with her family and her written words taking an emotional precedence, it becomes Clarissa’s right to question her brother’s motives and treatment of her while in full recognition of James Jr. holding no right in denying her anything. Clarissa begins to act in a more active and defensive nature than she once did, trying to achieve what independent status she desires. Towards the beginning of her maltreatment, she was noticeably hurt by her family’s wishes but still acted reserved as to retain a sense of respect. She now chooses to disregard a submissive state and fight for herself which can be read and felt through her written argument to her brother: “What right have YOU to dispose of my hand?—If you govern everybody else, you shall not govern me; especially in a

point so immediately relative to myself, and in which you neither have, nor ever shall have, anything to do” (*Clarissa* 306). Clarissa’s resistance and demeanor is aggressively defiant and is the focal point of the emotional sense of what rights she deserves and should have. Because Clarissa is placed within the confines of her mind and her room, she releases an explosive response—one built upon by her solitude and inability to speak to others. Her speech and writing are so closely intertwined at this moment that the conclusion can be drawn that both are not only aligned but they are also caused by the same patriarchal presence. This overarching patriarchal manifestation created from James Jr. and Clarissa’s parents, are in the forefront of Clarissa’s reasoning to Anna Howe.

Since Clarissa’s responses are entangled deeply in both verbal and physical actions, they come together and create who Clarissa is as a person and how she is an example of an eighteenth-century suppressed female. Clarissa’s defining factors are in result of her language, formulating and structuring her nexus into the qualities that define her motives for resisting patriarchy. This linguistic approach that Richardson uses for Clarissa as a character and to give her language a rhetorically written voice stems from Richardson’s ability to write characters that were based on his observations and the language used during these interactions. One way that linguistics and the physical world around Clarissa meet is through the objects in her room—signs of both escape and instruments that females would typically be expected to play. Clarissa writes about her instruments to Anna Howe by using her harpsichord as a way to block out language she does not want to listen to: “And am so little moved with his nonsense that I am frequently forced to go to my harpsichord to keep me awake and to silence his humdrum” (*Clarissa* 466). Through her tiredness and the dullness that she experiences, the physicality of the harpsichord and her tiredness relate themselves to her situation and where the silence relates itself to her

language and more internal situation. Clarissa is physically ill at this point in the novel as she loses sleep and does not eat, and it is because of this silence that causes her illness as her family forces silence on her and isolates her until she submits.

Based on the occurrence of physical objects and language being a metaphorical representation of Clarissa's situation and emotions, there becomes a connection between Richardson's usage of a physical society and the formation of Clarissa's emotions as a result. In order for Clarissa to accurately represent herself, she must use specific language that shows her mind and physical situation through her surroundings. Julia Kristeva writes about a similar notion based on the signification of language and objects: "Murder, death, and unchanging society represent precisely the inability to hear and understand the signifier as such—as ciphering, as rhythm, as a presence that precedes the signification of object or emotion" (Kristeva 355). Kristeva's assertion describes both Richardson's larger agenda for *Clarissa* as well as Clarissa herself as an exemplar of the eighteenth-century treatment of females within the family unit. Kristeva falls back on the idea of silence found throughout the first portion of the novel which can be related to the silencing or censor of the female population through a masculine voice. It is these objects in Clarissa's room and her emotional status based on her situation that is represented so clearly within her letters and words. Clarissa's objects begin to also reflect these events and how they are directly affecting her psychological state based on her situational experience with her father and brother, the distraction they give her, and the fact of how her harpsichord and other objects are found within the space of confinement that is her room.

To continue the idea of objectification, and after repeated attempts by Lovelace to win over Clarissa, Clarissa is tricked by Lovelace to come with him and away from her parents. It is

at this point in the novel where Lovelace becomes more defined as a character as much of the narrative is taken over by his voice and his letters to John Belford, his friend and confidant. Now that Clarissa has been taken and is being spoken for, Richardson emulates this usurpation in the fashion that most of Clarissa's dialogue and situations are written through Lovelace's eyes, showing that under patriarchy females were spoken for instead of being given their own voice. This is similar to Mrs. Andrews not writing any letters to Pamela but having Mr. Andrews be the primary letter writer instead. During one of the first dialogues between Clarissa and Lovelace at the bordello, Lovelace attempts to use his charm to win over Clarissa by saying, "Let us consider this point a little; and that upon our own principles as liberties, setting aside what the laws of our country, and its customs, oblige from us; which, nevertheless, we cannot get over till we have got over almost all moral obligations as members of society" (*Clarissa* 612). Lovelace seems to disregard custom as Clarissa does, but unlike Clarissa, Lovelace's selfish reasoning and burning passion is what guides his voice here. By both characters disregarding custom, they reveal their motives although for different purposes: Clarissa wanting an independent voice and Lovelace wanting a way to satisfy his passionate lust. Both handle and articulate their emotions in differing capacities through their letters and as the novel slowly progresses, Clarissa's emotional capacity is of a deteriorated mental state brought on by her parents and Lovelace.

Lovelace's motives become more clear to Clarissa and therefore to the audience, as we as readers become more entangled in the dueling stories of Clarissa and Lovelace, becoming a true audience to their emotions and selves. Lovelace's emotions always take the forefront of his writing as much of his writing seems sporadic and self-conscious of who he is and how he defines his lifestyle. Just as much of the first part of the novel consists of Clarissa and Anna Howe corresponding back and forth, Lovelace's portion consists of him and John Belford writing

avidly to one another. The synthesis and correlating factors that create both relationships between friends structure the way Richardson reveals each character for who they are by the emotional attachment they have for each other and their letters. Lovelace shows his emotional attachment early in his correspondence to Belford using his prideful commentary about his own thoughts and feelings: “Were every rake, nay, were every man, to sit down, as I do, and write all that enters into his head or into his heart, and to accuse himself with equal freedom and truth, what an army of miscreants should I have to keep me in countenance” (*Clarissa* 717). The fact that Lovelace writes from his heart, reveals his mind by the way he actively shows this through his physical person and his own nexus. Lovelace is impulsive, and this sets up his character through the thoughts and emotions he expresses through his letters and the scenes in which he confronts Clarissa about his overbearing love for her. Albrecht Von Haller writes about a similar notion in his review of *Clarissa* in 1749, which sets up the point of his thoughts on Lovelace as a character based on “the style of Clarissa is peculiar to itself; that of Lovelace is full of new words, arbitrarily formed in his own manner, which are strongly expressive of his ideas” (Haller 757). The way in which Richardson creates his characters is based on expressions that can only be felt through the character’s writing; as they lay out their person for the letter receivers to deeply absorb and base their assertion on what is motivating that character at the particular time of the written letter through their nexus of mind and body. Because of this strong connection to letter, self and then to society, the reader can see the physical representation of Lovelace and his basis for attempting to convert Clarissa into his wife through the abuse and treatment that causes Clarissa’s mind to shatter further.

The multiplicity of the letters in *Clarissa* becomes the main focal point of the novel during its middle stages, as the complication of Lovelace overtaking the narrative turns the novel

into much of what was seen through James Jr. 's writing and language. The presence of both antagonistic males through letters and language reveal the novel's ability to show a very male forward society, creating a synthesis through this nexus of mind and body that appears in the background at first; now coming into the foreground with Lovelace controlling the narrative process. This controlling nature of Lovelace, whether through physical means with Clarissa or through his own letters, becomes a ground for which readers can engage with the character's writing, which Thomas Keymer does expressively in his text, *Richardson's Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader*. It is important to my research to develop Keymer's pivotal text further in both his focus on *Clarissa* as well as the reader's activeness within the language and letters produced by Clarissa and Lovelace. As Keymer develops his notion of the epistolary genre and its impact on *Clarissa's* narrative, Keymer believes that, "In its very organisation the narrative is in conflict with itself, with results so discordant that at times one is driven to think not of competing versions of an identical reality, but of reality's displacement by the force of competing fictions" (Keymer 47). The displacement Keymer writes of stems from the novel's problem of perhaps saying too much at once, whether because of its length or its tendency to be over expressive with words. However, the fact that Richardson was attempting to mirror a pre-existing reality within fiction by utilizing his observations of society, Keymer believes this complicates the novel's aim of representing the eighteenth-century English society. With this said, I do believe Richardson draws an awareness to society's aim of patriarchy as cultural law in order to reveal, perhaps, to a much later audience society's own lawful attempts at forcing a father to the head of the family to control the sons, wives and, especially daughters, to perform what duties were considered important. I do not believe that *Clarissa* shows so much a

displacement, but rather the placement of a cultural awareness shown through a nexus emerging from the thoughts and feelings of those characters that drive the narrative in the novel.

To develop this multiplicity in narrative further, Keymer's usage of Richardson's moment-to-moment device to critique the novel is another ground to unpack and explore. The events situated in *Clarissa* relate themselves with the abilities of the letter writers to accurately imbue their emotional states within their own words, which Keymer writes, "The very multiplicity of the narrative makes possible (and indeed requires) a wary consideration of what happens to events in the process of narration, impressing on the reader the remoteness of what he is asked to interpret" (Keymer 59). Our requirement as critical readers is to interpret the language and situations the characters in a work of fiction are faced against. In *Clarissa's* case, the reader utilizes their own thoughts and feelings and how that can impact the events that unfold throughout Clarissa's short life. It is our task to allow Richardson's words to emanate within us, to have these reactions to his novel. By using multiple narratives, although competing with one another, Richardson invites us as the reader to analyze why the narratives are either important or dismissable to the overall state of the characters' lives. Although Keymer disagrees with my own research, I do believe these letters and narratives function to create a nexus between person and letter. This is Richardson's way of relating the cultural relevance of the effects that patriarchy held over the feminine mind and what was expected of them to abide by through state and household. Clarissa is reflecting this nexus well through her deteriorated state of mind, showing a pre-existing society through emotional trauma rather than just a historical account with any lack of an emotional connection on the reader's part.

Keymer's assertion of reader engagement feels the most pertinent example of the influence of any work of fiction, not just in *Clarissa*. Although our arguments do not always fall

in line with one another, we still focus on the importance of the reader. Whether through our activity of reading and critiquing taking precedence over Richardson and the epistolary format; or as I have stated: the way in which we as readers need to feel these characters in order to understand a pre-existing society impacting and affecting the characters emotions and creating a nexus between mind, body and reality—either way, a reader must always be present. The last argument I will be evaluating from Keymer both solidifies and defines my pointed argument as, “Readers *in* the novel provide models for readers *of* it; and while Anna and Belford are by no means perfect exegetes, both have the right idea” (Keymer 59); which creates these model examples of characters, like Anna Howe and John Belford, to be our conduits into the emotional trauma experienced by a close friend of Clarissa’s (Anna) as well as someone who experiences Clarissa’s final days (Belford). We as readers become exegetes ourselves, filling in the gaps of these letters that provide a basic outline of a more grandiose idea of eighteenth-century societal law and the expectation of wives. Richardson’s capability as an author and publisher gives room to experiment with different ways of implanting this society and cultural norm within his narrative, letting his characters toy around with these ideas and see where they allow the narrative to lead. Our connection to these characters is done so through their letters and the nexus they create from their own person, establishing the ways we as modern day readers can capture a vision of what social aims were important and perhaps, how they affected mental stability within its female population. Clarissa’s own entrapment is telling of this social aim of patriarchal standards, as she too is trapped within her own mind and private space, unable to break free.

As Clarissa’s entrapment continues, she begins to drift farther and farther away from the person she once was. Previously unfamiliar with such a devastating trauma as what she is

receiving from her parents and Robert Lovelace, her letters begin to reflect this trauma in ways that have not yet truly become active until this point in the novel. From the first stages of the novel, readers see the beginnings of her mental collapse, but when she is kidnapped and forced to experience constant advances by Lovelace her shattered psyche becomes more discernible through her writing. Because of Lovelace's actions and the way he handles each meeting with Clarissa, the idea of patriarchy being the underlying cause becomes more prevalent. Clarissa's mistreatment by her father and brother trying to force her to adhere to customs and laws, followed by Lovelace's constant advances to make Clarissa his wife, shape the nexus Clarissa creates through her letters. One way in which Clarissa does so is through one of the letters that show this notion of loss and aloneness: "I am careless at present of consequences. I hate myself: and who is it I have reason to value?—Not the man who could form a plot to disgrace his own hopes, as well as a poor friendless creature (made friendless by himself)" (*Clarissa* 732). This letter begins to link Clarissa closer to the mental state she appears in during the end of the novel—completely devoid of any emotion other than an active wish (or longing) to die. Clarissa begins to talk about her loss of value in living and relinquishing any thought of escaping both her situation with her family and Lovelace. Clarissa's language here results from her consciousness turning to thoughts of death and depression which Joseph Bray touches on because "the letter is often associated solely with the narrating self, as it is assumed that the letter-writer communicates only those thoughts that he or she has at the time of writing, thinking 'out loud' in a 'stream-of-consciousness'" (Bray 19). With Bray's argument in mind, it is clear that Clarissa's thought process based on a patriarchal cause is consuming her mind and, therefore, her writing with thoughts of depression and anxiety toward the situation she was placed in. Because her mind is being so deeply affected by despair, she can only relate her thoughts through the

underlying notion that patriarchy is the cause of this result. The showing of this result is done through Richardson's here-and-now storytelling as Clarissa is narrating her own story at the time it is happening, rather than after the fact which would have given her more time to have a more passive reflection on it.

After Clarissa's kidnapping, Robert Lovelace becomes more wildly obsessed with the idea of swaying Clarissa into marriage than previously. Through Clarissa's entrapment, Lovelace finally has her isolated for the purposes of wearing down her mentality to the point where she, just as Pamela, conforms to male dominance. Clarissa, just as with her parents, denies his desires at every turn, which feeds into Lovelace's uncontrollable passion that fuels his sexual desires toward Clarissa. Much of this part of the novel deals with the bodily aspects of letter writing that have briefly been mentioned earlier in this chapter. In order for a letter to create a nexus of a person, the letter must fully envisage the writer to then become a mirrored image of the self in both mind and physical self. As Lovelace is intercepting Clarissa's letters and eventually pretending to be her through forged letters sent to Anna Howe, Lovelace is breaching this metaphorical contract a letter writer and letter receiver have with one another. Lovelace's cunning strategies are shown in great length through his telling of the story and in one particular letter he writes to John Belford that he is "always careful to open covers cautiously, and to preserve seals entire. I will draw out from this cursed letter an alphabet" (*Clarissa* 754), which becomes his primary motive through most of the latter portion of the novel. With Lovelace reading Clarissa's letters and whatever letters she is supposed to receive, he is effectively breaching Clarissa's person and preventing a type of language to occur that should only be experienced by herself and Anna Howe. Lovelace is structuring his language through a perverse alphabet which, given who Lovelace is, defines him through his own nexus of

letters, speeches and language. Gerald MacLean also writes in a similar notion about the privacy of letters and the importance that privacy holds to the writer: “Whatever else they may be, letters are not and never can be an entirely private exchange involving only two people. Letters may contain or reveal secrets, but they can never themselves be secrets” (MacLean 177). MacLean’s argument shows a truth in a wider social context but to Clarissa, her letters contain her private self and she wishes to choose who sees them. Given that her letters are usually sealed at the point when Lovelace reads them shows the breach of self that MacLean does not seem to focus on. The fact that Lovelace breaks this metaphorical contract in correspondence, destroys the linkage that is profoundly important to both Clarissa and Anna Howe, and results in this being the first signs of Lovelace’s rape of Clarissa. With Lovelace invading Clarissa’s private space, he opens up ways to do so in a physical surrounding which results in both abuse and rape that correlates to his dominant personality and his prideful outlook as he was rarely denied access to a female before he experienced opposition by Clarissa.

Through Lovelace’s assertion of controlling Clarissa, he begins to not only open her letters, but begins to write for her, actively shutting her out from any sense of communication. This silencing of Clarissa has been a constant occurrence from her time spent at her parents’ house to being kidnapped and taken to Mrs. Sinclair’s bordello. Because of this silencing, Lovelace utilizes methods in order to be the only person in Clarissa’s life, effectively continuing the damage her mind is suffering. As Lovelace takes over Clarissa’s writing, he, again, is overtaking her person and body that is constructed through her letters. Being the crafty male that Lovelace is, he carefully begins to emulate Clarissa’s writing to Anna Howe, who does not at first notice the person she is writing to is not her friend, but we as readers can see a noticeable difference: “I took great pains in writing this. It cannot, I hope, be suspected. Her hand is so

very delicate. Yet hers is written less beautifully than she usually writes: and I hope Miss Howe will allow somewhat for hurry of spirits, and unsteady fingers” (*Clarissa* 816). Lovelace is feeding off of the idea that much of who Clarissa was is now gone and her writing reflects this state of mind. Her writing begins to become more distant and sporadic as her letters reflect what condition her mind is under and Lovelace uses this to his advantage when writing for her. Anna Howe is the only person who can, eventually, sense Clarissa’s mental strain through her writing based on the rapport and connection the two friends have. Everyone else that Clarissa is cut off from would not notice this change or even care based on her estrangement from her family because of their thinking she chose to leave them for Lovelace. Because of this alienation from her family, Lovelace is able to make moves toward his eventual, but failed, goal of forcing Clarissa to conform and be his wife.

With Clarissa’s body being drastically envisioned within her letters and a foretelling for the physical breach of self by Lovelace, Clarissa begins to lose all authority she once had in controlling what she wrote and thought about. Each character, with the exception of Anna Howe and John Belford, has taken steps to control her mind and self through either locking her in a room or wearing down her mind to force a decision that benefited the family or Lovelace’s need for her. Marta Kvanne delves deeper into the idea of loss of authority through direct linkage in body and letter:

These ‘accidents that happen to letters’ are obviously more than simple mishaps; they are fundamentally a denial of authority to the letter as the written self and a denial of authority to the body behind that letter—indeed, they deny any authority at all to the fixed and unified self and body. (Kvanne 245)

Kvande's assessment about the correlation between the denial of authority in an opened letter and the writer of said letter being denied that same authority stems from the notion of a letter being a private space that should have the authority of choice between who receives the letter. Kvande believes Clarissa's body is being denied the right she should have in choice which reflects Lovelace's abuse and rape of her, as well as her parents censoring her own thoughts and feelings towards how she views marriage as companionate rather than a marriage existing primarily for monetary purposes. The unification of body and letter becomes Richardson's ultimate goal in switching perspectives from Clarissa to Lovelace, as Lovelace is now controlling both Clarissa's mind and body into what he wants her to be. Lovelace's control over Clarissa creates the way in which he will eventually be connected to her through the act of rape, as both bodies become one during this upcoming and imminent atrocity. By taking all of Clarissa's authority in both mind and body, Lovelace is continuing the act of censoring that Clarissa's parents used from the beginnings of the novel. This is what causes the suffering, both physical and mental, that she is experiencing based on the patriarchal intents of her parents and the same notions that Lovelace is forcing upon her during the midpoint of the novel.

Because of Clarissa's rape, she is fully devoid of self and connection to anything that resembles the happiness she once felt. The breaking of this linkage between self and letter and the situations and trials Clarissa is put through, is what ultimately destroys her. With the loss of any hope of being reunited with her family and the Harlowes being more accepting of her want of choice, her letters expressively reflect this shattered nexus of her state of mind. Kvande completes this thought about Clarissa's breach of self and letters and the destruction that occurs because of it:

Because of the connections posited between letter, body, and self, an assault on any one of them destroys the wholeness of all three. Connecting the letter, the body, and the self only increases their vulnerability. Clarissa's derangement of self after the rape and her eventual death thus come to indicate a failure of manuscripts to preserve the self.

(Kvande 245)

Again, Kvande argues her assertion by commenting on the relation between Clarissa's body in her letters and the rape that occurs after Lovelace begins to breach her letters. Clarissa's vulnerability happens because she chooses to link herself to her letters, creating this nexus between self and what is represented through her letters. The assault and breach that Clarissa traumatically experiences creates the sense that the wholeness of Clarissa is finally destroyed after the events of the rape occur. Clarissa completely breaks down at this point as she begins to have her own writing reflect the deathly state she is under. The reflection of loss and death in Clarissa's letters ties in with not being in control of her letters, with the fact that she loses control of herself, and with the destruction of her letters relating to the destruction of her physical self. It seems that without any form of corresponding and with having her own voice silenced, Richardson is relating the death of language to the death of Clarissa. And it is the death of letters and self that is caused by the growing shadow that patriarchy has cast over Clarissa's life, completing its cycle of submission to the practice or submit to the death of self.

The submission to this practice that Clarissa is in constant combat with, requires a direct focus on the theme of sexuality within the novel. Because Clarissa is in a constant struggle and this struggle being shown through her own nexus of mind and body within her correspondence, much of Clarissa's own sexuality is found and exemplified through her letters. In Terry Eagleton's *The Rape of Clarissa*, the reader gains a more in-depth look at Clarissa's situation,

and the effects that society had on Richardson when constructing his second novel. Eagleton writes from a space that is entirely sensitive to eighteenth-century feminine sexuality, and states how, “The letter in *Clarissa*, then, is the site of a constant power struggle. For Clarissa herself, writing, like sexuality, is a private, always violable space, a secret enterprise fraught with deadly risk” (Eagleton 49) which shows this cycle of struggle and submission found in almost every letter Clarissa pens. Clarissa’s sexuality being private, just as a letter should be, emerges from the fact that her outward reality is silenced. Because Clarissa is constantly isolated from her own experiences as a growing lady, she fails to participate in any semblance of her own growth process, denied not by her own wishes, but by her parents and Lovelace’s wants. This is one of the ways Clarissa wishing to link herself in her letters becomes a risk, opening herself to the trauma that has confined her life to these private spaces. But this risk is also her release, release from these spaces that she is forced into, even if it is a temporary reprieve from the physical and psychological trauma ensuing.

To further Eagleton’s point, and to draw on the capacity of Charlotte Harlowe, Clarissa’s mother, it is important to note the disconnect from one feminine mind to another. Mrs. Harlowe, although in constant alliance with the family, always seems held back and perhaps the only family member that can truly see Clarissa’s anguish, as someone who deals with this mistreatment from her husband as well. With this said, Eagleton states a valid point in that, “Mrs. Harlowe prefers her daughter to read rather than write—to conform herself to another’s text rather than to produce her own meanings” (Eagleton 50), which is indicative of not only the period itself, but perhaps Mrs. Harlowe’s own struggle with the same problem. Mrs. Harlowe is taught, by law and husband, that this is the feminine task and what is expected during the eighteenth-century. It is always hard to say what Charlotte’s thought process is, since she

rarely gets much space to write and reflect within the novel, reaffirming this point further.

Clarissa is so focused on the importance of other texts and writing, whether it is the character's letters, Lovelace and Belford's love for classic literature, or even in an outward sense, written law; it becomes a prominent point of discussion as to how this fiction is utilizing pre-existing and very real texts and their own impact on Richardson's writing process. Although *Clarissa* is forced into a lack of meaning discovered through her own thoughts, this reveals and even requires the reader to see what is unsaid because of its lack of place in the novel.

Clarissa's body is so present within her letters and writing that the unification of both creating this nexus of her body, becomes synthesized through her rape by Lovelace. Eagleton writes of this traumatic space that allows *Clarissa* to become the main sympathetic point of the novel: "The letter comes to signify nothing quite so much as female sexuality itself, that folded, secret place which is always open to violent intrusion" (Eagleton 54). Eagleton's relation to the private space which becomes public to Lovelace is this very nexus of self, not only of *Clarissa*'s being but of Lovelace's as well. The reader can truly see the atrocity that comes from an overly conscious and active male desire that is fueled from passion that is unattained, specific to Lovelace. The fact that Lovelace is transmitting his actions to his letters to Belford, shows his unification of mind and body with his written language, making his own nexus a reality within the fiction. Although it can be argued that this idea is because of the characters' devotion to their letters, placing their emotions and lives solely in their letters which opens them up to these critiques and feelings, it is this vulnerability that allows them to become exemplified of their own situations. Richardson's ability as an author stems from his retellings and feelings of what he was observing within society, even perhaps opening himself up to the same trauma; but because

of Richardson's own desires as an author, readers can vividly feel, even if they cannot see, the problematic social norms that resulted from submission and patriarchy itself.

After Clarissa's rape, she escapes two times, the first attempt failing and the other resulting in imprisonment for unpaid bills at Mrs. Sinclair's bordello. This imprisonment is another attempt by Lovelace to recapture Clarissa, but she is eventually released and finds refuge in a shop whose owners protect her. During this time, Clarissa and John Belford become close as Clarissa discovers he is not like his friend Lovelace, as he actually resents everything Lovelace has done to her. Clarissa at this point in the novel, realizes that she is dying from both malnutrition and a broken heart given to her by her parents and the realization that there exists a man like Lovelace in a world that she once knew and loved. Because of this newfound friendship in Belford, he becomes a confidant and the eventual executor of Clarissa's Will, knowing it would be impossible to have Anna Howe be so given their forced severed correspondence. In one letter, Belford writes in vivid detail about Clarissa's health and her attempt to read letters sent by Anna Howe, "The lady, after I had withdrawn, attempted to read the letters I brought her. But she could read but a little way in one of them, and had great emotions upon it" (*Clarissa* 1072). The fact that Clarissa can barely read and does not have the strength for any comprehension of what is happening to her, reaffirms her mental breakage and stress being related to her family's patriarchal pursuits and casting her out; as well as, Lovelace's attempts at making her his wife. The destruction that patriarchal intent has caused can be seen clearly through Belford and his telling of Clarissa's story when she cannot. The emotional residue that creates Belford's letter and the sensibility that he infuses within his words allows readers to understand why he is not only feeling this way through his person, but through his letters as well. He is capturing the nexus of self through his letters given his grieving mind

towards Clarissa and how he bodily reacts through crying and the motivation to physically help her.

Through the mental strain and bodily disintegration that Clarissa is undergoing, her mind begins to blame herself for her actions as she actively begins to hate herself for what she thinks she has put herself through. Clarissa's self-hatred is relatable to a person being so utterly depressed that their mind focuses on hating the self, just as they think or know others feel about them. Donnalee Frega touches on a similar idea in that Clarissa's psyche is so deeply affected by the instability of her situation that she hates what the outcome has turned out to be: "Considered from this psychological perspective, Clarissa's struggle with her family becomes doubly tragic because it must be viewed as a double struggle. Clarissa cannot accept responsibility for herself without blaming herself for being herself" (Frega 37). This struggle that Frega writes about is in direct relation to Clarissa's parents being the initial cause of her breakdown, even though Clarissa will not admit they are the cause given that she still loves and respects them. A few pages later, Frega continues, "Her abstinence, whether it is considered as starving or fasting, illness or obstinacy, inspires awe and admiration in those who hear of her sufferings" (Frega 94) which shows the mental strain that Clarissa has, as it becomes physically harmful to her and results in her eventual death. An example of Clarissa's deterioration and lack of care towards her body is shown through her poetic meditation based on the book of psalms: "For my days are consumed like smoke: and my bones are burnt as the hearth. My heart is smitten and withered like grass: so that I forget to eat my bread" (*Clarissa* 1221). Clarissa's mental strain also shows her own personal situation is affecting those around her just as her letters do the same for Anna Howe, John Belford and us, as the audience, experiencing and sympathizing for Clarissa's situation. Just as Belford cries when seeing Clarissa read her own letters, and just as Anna Howe

is disturbed at the thought of her best friend dying from her patriarchal and abusive surroundings, we too, must feel and understand what mental strain she is under in order to achieve the type of connection that Richardson seems to be intent on establishing through his comparisons to the metaphorical death of females under a censoring system and practice of patriarchy.

Given Richardson's choice in differing styles of characters, each character's writing styles relates fully to the character's recognition of the atrocities they committed upon Clarissa's mind and body. Clarissa's family's mental abuse and forced seclusion is one reason why Clarissa dies, as is Lovelace's failed attempts at breaking down her mind and then raping her, which resulted from a male dominating force in pursuit of a patriarchal desire. However, Lovelace writes to Belford about his feelings for Clarissa and his coming to terms with what he has done to her:

Once more, how could I be such a villain to so divine a creature! Yet love her all the time, as never man loved woman!—Curse upon my contriving genius! Curse upon my intriguing head, and upon my seconding heart!—To sport with the fame, with the honour, with the life, of such an angel of a woman!—Oh my damned Incredulity! (*Clarissa* 1344)

Lovelace's written lines show the ability for Richardson to change his character's outcomes just as, perhaps, an actual person would change their demeanor if they were faced with a similar situation. This change in moral outcomes is Richardson's way of revealing his own writing style coming from society and people as a whole, not so much a singular situation. With Lovelace cursing himself for the mental and physical pain he inflicted on Clarissa, he tries to find any possible route to visit her and apologize. However, even with his change of heart, nothing

Lovelace attempts to reverse what he forced upon Clarissa, making his repentant notions invalid in any sense of a deserved retribution.

Because of Clarissa's failing health, her family and Lovelace begin to fully realize the extent of the damage they caused to Clarissa. All of these characters repent the way they handled the situation and are deeply grieved by the fact that they were all so blinded by their own wants. Through the letters Clarissa and Anna Howe receive, we as readers can see how each family member and Lovelace have come to this recognition that the disturbing and strong-willed determination of attempting to force Clarissa to submit to patriarchy caused her death. In one piece of correspondence that Richardson sent to Sarah Wescomb, he reveals his direct intention of stylizing his characters: "Styles differ...as much as faces, and are indicative, generally beyond the power of disguise, of the mind of the writer!" (qtd. in Curran 26). Richardson and Wescomb's correspondence also draws on the fact that Richardson was pulling styles not so much from different real life people but from his observations of the way these people acted based on the surrounding society that held certain expectations for them, whether this was personal or by custom. His exclamation when writing to Wescomb about the writer's mind is especially telling given the force and the intense nature one can feel from Richardson's own letter and voice.

After the events of Clarissa's family and Lovelace seeking redemption, Clarissa is in the final stages of her life, finally achieving what she had wanted after she was raped. The primary narrative is taken over by John Belford, so the readers see the tragic last days of Clarissa through his eyes. As Clarissa is dying, Belford's account of her death is filled with the exact emotional response that has been akin to his character since the beginnings of the novel. Belford infuses his character along with his utter grief into one of his last letters to Lovelace as he watches

Clarissa die, writing “And with these words, the last but half-pronounced, [she] expired: such a smile, such a charming serenity over-spreading her sweet face at the instant as seemed to manifest her eternal happiness already begun. Oh Lovelace!—But I can write no more!” (*Clarissa* 1362). This emotional response is not only part of who Belford is, but can be emotionally impactful towards the audience as well. Because Richardson was able to create a story utilizing emotional responses through letter writing, readers who have been sympathizing and grieving through the entirety of Clarissa’s journey become Belford at this moment in time. Readers are able to feel and have also experienced Clarissa’s journey throughout the novel and are able to piece the narrative together with the only act that brought Clarissa here: abusive patriarchal intent. The fact Clarissa’s death silences Belford silences us as well. Clarissa’s death also connects itself to the death of patriarchy as both Clarissa’s family and Lovelace, although too late, attempt to take back what they have done to Clarissa, effectively silencing their own patriarchal pursuits they had from the onset of the novel.

Clarissa’s death, and the emotional repercussions by her family and Lovelace that ensue, completes this cycle Richardson crafted within his second novel: to create a nexus between self and letter, showing the emotional and psychological effects culture and law can hold over a population. Although this has been my poignant focal point for my research, I do believe it is important to include an author that would vastly disagree with my own reading of the novel. Terry Castle in her scholastic text *Clarissa’s Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson’s Clarissa*, reveals the notion of a true reader and how those who read for reflection of society and the envisage of self within letters are incorrect in the stance they take. To begin with Castle’s argument, she believes of a similar risk as to Eagleton’s belief, of opening the self up to letters, whether it is the characters in *Clarissa* or the readers themselves. Castle writes, “Letters open

themselves, promiscuously to distortion by readers, who, out of naivete or unscrupulousness, disregard the intended meaning of the letter writer” (Castle 44), which shows us the complications of placing our emotional selves within the character’s situations. I do truly believe that Richardson wanted to create a connection between the feeling-self and the age in which he wrote in. Because of the Age of Sensibility, the English population, expressively the male population, began feeling more; and it was these emotional and sympathetic connections to others that allowed this age to thrive with a more sentimental desire. Richardson’s placing these concepts within *Clarissa* invites the reader to feel along with the other characters and help capture the written nexus these characters link between self and situation.

To expand on this emotional capacity further, Castle asserts her point about our own misunderstandings and misreadings when we place our emotions in the hands of Richardson’s characters. These projections, as Castle refers to them as, “are multiple, just as operations of desire themselves are multiple. Every reading thus becomes in some sense a misreading” (Castle 45) and through these misreadings readers distance themselves from the main point of Castle’s argument. I believe the opposite, that through our own readings, whether through feeling or becoming a true reader by our own intuition, we uncover a truth that is defined by our own experiences and willingness to read something how we choose fit. It becomes problematic, yes, to allow an author to have that power over a reader, but given the period’s own power struggle of morality, which began to be solved by feeling returning to literature, it becomes the part of reader to choose whether they want to isolate themselves away from an author, or allow that author to establish their own nexus from word to paper to our hearts. By severing this connection, we as an interpretive reader lose the feelings of the characters, destroying this nexus

that Richardson and his characters create through their own tellings of an age that found itself controlled by patriarchal whims.

Clarissa's ability to create a linkage between her mind and body through her written nexus can be read and seen drastically in what is referred to as her "mad papers." These partial letters are the fragments that Lovelace finds on the floor of Clarissa's room soon after the events of the rape have occurred. They show a deranged and fragmented mind that has now fully succumbed to deterioration due to both the mental and physical abuse Lovelace as inflicted upon the heroine. Castle writes extensively on these "mad papers" as another clue for readers to decipher and use as a cipher to further the reading and narrative process. These "mad papers," as Castle writes, "are models of syntactic and semantic interruption; they suggest Clarissa's sense of failure, both as exegete and 'scribbler'" (Castle 119) that allow readers into the mind of a girl that has just undergone what is essentially the dismantling of her being. These letters are fragmentary in nature, showing this disruption in language that Castle analyzes, but it also is the key to understanding Clarissa's own shattered mind and battered body. These letters reflect the loss of innocence and virtue that were so near and dear to Clarissa from the outset of the novel, which can be read through the poem she quotes in letter X: "When honour's lost, 'tis a relief to die:/ Death's but a sure retreat from infamy." Clarissa continues on to poetically state that, "I'm tott'ring on the brink/ Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left!/ Assist me in the pangs of my affliction," showing still further the effect that words and language can have over the reader (*Clarissa* 893). This is Clarissa's call for help to Anna Howe in a way that reveals itself to be not only in distress, but in a way that reflects a mind that wishes to die. Although these phases are syntactically distorted and even to the point of rambling as Castle suggests, the syntax and fragmentary nature is Clarissa's and Richardson's way of establishing this mind and body nexus

that relates itself to a pre-existing patriarchal society. These ramblings are our cipher into both what the outcome of rape and silence has brought to Clarissa, as well as what society has done to her based on its very centered and concentrated dominance of women by men.

Castle's analysis of the ciphering and deciphering of letters within *Clarissa* allows readers to understand further the importance of an interpretation led by intuition rather than utilizing the power that can come from an author. To further Clarissa's own correspondence between the nexus of her mind and body, it becomes apt to consider her death further, in terms of the coffin built and the inscriptions placed upon the coffin signifying Clarissa's dying language. Clarissa's coffin holds symbols printed upon it to reflect the body that will eventually be held within it. These symbols correlate to Clarissa's own shattered mentality brought on by her struggles with her family as well as coping with her own rape and abuse by Lovelace. Many of these inscriptions and symbols serve as her epitaph, the final language she will come to know. These symbols include a winged hourglass above an urn, showing that Clarissa's time on earth is not long and that her own time has been encased within the solitude of her mind and the physical surroundings of the rooms she was confined to. It also includes a white lily that had been cut at the head, showing her own virtue and purity is the cause of her death, cut short and unable to blossom further. These symbols are metaphorically bodily, representing Clarissa as the dying flower, rather than a blossoming beauty; and an hourglass that shows the essence of little time left. Castle's own interpretation of these symbols and biblical inscriptions create the sense of this being Clarissa's final text as shown by: "The coffin is a text that encases, literally, its own dead author. To 'penetrate' the engraved lid is also to confront a corpse" (Castle 144). The penetration we as readers do, to Castle, seems to be relatable to Clarissa's own vile penetration by Lovelace. Castle seems to be making a statement about an incorrect reading of the coffin

itself, one that needs to be left alone, furthering our own reading away from correspondence into the importance of our own reading away from authorial nature.

Through the following critique of Castle's text, and the appreciation I do have for it, ending on her assumption of Clarissa's own ignorance and naivety by attempting to embody herself is important to understanding why it is pivotal that she does attempt to embody the self through her letters. Castle states, "here understanding is limited because she [Clarissa] believes, innocently enough, in a correspondence between utterance and truth, between the outward sign and the inward reality. Clarissa's basic linguistic assumption is that words embody" (Castle 67)—which I believe can show Clarissa's ability to establish her nexus through her letters being that of the outward sign and her own inward reality. I do not believe this so much complicates the text and the epistolary genre, but rather furthers its impact on writing. For Clarissa to show her emotions and allow them to flow through each word she writes reflects Richardson's own ability as author to share in this same experience. Richardson's desire of reflecting his own disagreement in patriarchal standards becomes what guides the narrative and Clarissa's pen. Castle continues on the same subject by asserting Clarissa's revealing nature to Anna because, "she [Clarissa] holds implicitly to a myth of language, which she applies first to her own discourse, and then by extension to the speech of others" (Castle 67). The myth that Castle believes Clarissa evokes has a way of persuading her letter receivers into a submission through discourse. Although I do agree it is still Clarissa's desire of accurately representing her own trauma and nexus of mind and body in a fashion that drives the narrative to the point of the very outward reality that is prevalent within the text. The emotional damage done to a female population under patriarchal norms shows the psychological destruction it had. This pre-existing society is what causes Clarissa's death through the extension of her family and Lovelace. And I

believe this is written and expressed well through the conclusion of the novel and the points it has been taking in order to reflect the familial anguish that the Harlowes now realize.

Clarissa ends with the grievances of all characters who desperately try to reverse the death they have caused. James Sr. and Charlotte pass away soon after Clarissa does, Lovelace is killed in a duel with Clarissa's cousin Edward, but Anna Howe finds herself married to a husband who imbues a caring nature just as John Belford does. Richardson ending his novel with more low points than *Pamela* does relate back to the idea of patriarchy causing the internal death of females based on all rights and thoughts being stripped away, leaving only a shell of conformity. With Richardson's ability to write about society and create these here-and-now moments, we find in *Clarissa* much of Richardson's observations as a necessity to reflect a society that prided itself on the importance of class, marriage and males. Eve Tavor Bannet's research uncovers claims made by many of the female readers who took the novel's reflection to heart as, "Readers responded accordingly, especially to *Clarissa*: some ladies declared that they saw something of themselves, their family, or their friends in the heroine or the Harlowes" (Bannet 139). The only way Richardson was able to create this nexus of mind and body was to synthesize both reality and the epistolary in a fictional setting which created a type of metaphorical bridge between a patriarchal society and the people it affected. Clarissa is an extreme case of the effects of patriarchy, but it was also Richardson's feelings on the matter and the way patriarchy dissolved any noticeable and unique traits females could have once had before being subjected to a male whim. Through years of expected feminine conformity, patriarchy created the tendency to break down a feminine mind and force them into a custom that was all male force and no give towards female happiness. With Richardson being male, his theme of a disavowal of patriarchy was out of place during a century where males dominated

society. Richardson's ability to speak out against patriarchal intent and through avid extremes, unveils patriarchy as the death of defining characteristics, the death of the mind it inflicts, and the death of the body of which it can destroy, shows the start of a slow shift towards a more expected image of what eighteenth-century England held over its female population.

Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded and *Clarissa; or, the History of a Young Lady* remain two examples which provide a social critique about a tradition Samuel Richardson felt undermined and destroyed the physical and psychological properties of women during the English eighteenth-century. Richardson was able to convey ways for males to change their ideologies and begin to treat their wives in a more respected and independent manner. Richardson was so heavily influenced by the negative institution that patriarchy was, that it required him to become enthusiastically attached to both of his heroines. For example, within the preface of the Penguin edition of *Clarissa*, Angus Ross reveals Richardson's attachment to Clarissa in terms of how, "Some of the tensions in the fable are worth pausing over. Clarissa, 'my girl' as Richardson often calls her in his letters, is clearly intended to be a model" (Ross 18). The fact that Richardson takes almost a fatherly stance over Clarissa is indicative of himself as a writer and creator of these characters and stories. He wanted to include these ideas of morals and humanity within *Pamela* and *Clarissa* to connect his readers, whether past or present, to the importance of morality and the disavowal of a social system that reflected the deeper and darker ideologies of eighteenth-century England. Richardson accurately and avidly was able to do so through the epistolary genre, to have Pamela and Clarissa be that social experience and show the outcomes through their nexus of self through their minds and bodies within their letters.

This understanding of the nexus both heroines create falls on the requirement of the reader to make these connections to Pamela and Clarissa, wanting to have sympathy for these

characters just as Richardson did. It also falls on the reader to spread these ideas forward as Pamela did through chronicling her journeys, and Clarissa through Anna Howe and John Belford; being the ones who protected and showcased her story, memories and anguish. Because present day readers can see these outcomes between Pamela and Clarissa at the ends of their respective novels, we gain the sense that the decline of patriarchy had truly impacted society by making it a part of culture and institutionalized. These feelings are internalized because of Pamela becoming Mr. B—'s social expectation, which was reflected through a pre-existing society; and through Clarissa's death as her only escape from her tormented self, because of what tradition and culture expected from her. These notions are forever felt through Richardson's authorship, Pamela and Clarissa's physical and psychological erasure, and the historical and the fictional becoming intertwined between all characters. We as readers now become these experiences and gain clarity through Pamela and Clarissa's moment-to-moment writing based on their minds guiding their hands, and their bodies becoming their letters as a nexus of selfhood. Because these instances of self are being transcribed to the letters written, we too can make the conclusion, just as Clarissa does, that "My heart and my hand shall never be separated" (*Clarissa* 939).

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